

THE GRAMOPHONE

London Office:
58, Frith Street,
London, W. 1

Edited by
COMPTON MACKENZIE

TELEPHONE: Regent 1383
TELEGRAMS:
Parmaxto, Westcent, London.

Vol. V.

JUNE, 1927

No. 1

All communications should be addressed to the London Office. In the case of MSS. or of letters requiring an answer an addressed and stamped envelope must be enclosed.

All cheques, money orders and postal orders should be in favour of "Gramophone (Publications) Ltd.," and should be crossed "Bank of Liverpool and Martins, Ltd."

For the convenience of readers the following are kept in stock:—

Red cloth spring-back Binding Case with gilt lettering (for the preservation of current numbers), 3s. 6d., postage 6d.

Volumes II., III. and IV. unbound with Index, 15s. each post free. Index alone 1s.

Complete bound volumes, III. and IV., 20s. each, post free in U.K.

Separate numbers of Vols. II., III., IV. and V., 1s. each, postage 2d. A few copies of Vol. I., 1s. 2d. post free.

COLOURED PORTRAIT OF MOZART (Vol. III., No. 7), WAGNER (Vol. IV., No. 1), BEETHOVEN (Vol. IV., No. 7), 1s. 2d. each post free.

The Annual Subscription for THE GRAMOPHONE is 14s., post free, from the London Office.

U.S.A. annual subscription \$3.50 post free. Cheques on local banks should be drafted to "Gramophone (Publications) Ltd."

MUSIC AND THE GRAMOPHONE, compiled by H. L. Wilson, 288 pp., 7s. 6d., postage 6d.

THOUGHTS ON MUSIC, compiled by Hervey Elwes, 216 pp., 8vo, cloth, 6s., postage 6d.

A LIST OF RECORDED CHAMBER MUSIC and Supplement to July, 1926 (N.G.S. booklet), 9d., postage 1d.

GRAMOPHONE TIPS, by Capt. H. T. Barnett, M.I.E.E. New Edition, 1s. post free. Last Edition (1925) 9d. post free.

THE WILSON PROTRACTOR (for testing needle-track alignment), 1s., postage 2d.

THE LIFE BELT, for Continental fitting, 5s. post free. Adaptor for H.M.V. fitting 1s. extra, for Columbia fitting 1s. 6d. extra.

W. G. N. WEIGHT ADJUSTER for goose-neck tone-arms or for new H.M.V. models, 7s. 6d., postage 3d. (Full instructions for fitting and use enclosed.)

W. S. A. WEIGHT ADJUSTER for (Columbia) straight tone-arms, 10s., postage 3d.



THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER (Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

German Opera at Covent Garden

IN accordance with the custom established by the London Opera Syndicate, the early weeks of the summer season at Covent Garden have been devoted to German performances, including two complete cycles of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Beyond notice of these, it will be impossible to extend the present article; and even so, my story cannot well be completed without overflowing into the August number, inasmuch as the Italian half of the season will be continuing until too late in June to be wholly dealt with in our following issue.

I take it that the interest of GRAMOPHONE readers in London's too brief annual festival of opera on the

"grand scale" is mainly directed to what is done—may I say in the flesh?—by those eminent foreign artists whose records are reaching us by monthly instalments all the year round. For this reason more particularly I account it a privilege that so many of these eminent ones should come (thanks to lucrative contracts) and be heard here—collected "stars," in well-disposed constellations—even for so short a period as eight consecutive weeks. (Would that it were for longer! I have already suggested that a three months' season can be made to pay quite as well; and, since writing that, I have ascertained that Lt.-Col. Blois is veering round to the same opinion,

in view of the increased subscription and the very big attendances this year.) It is hardly necessary to repeat that these rare continental visitors are extremely expensive. To expect performances of the same class at any "national opera house" carried on in the ordinary way, even with the aid of a State subsidy, would be manifestly absurd. Society and the wealthy patrons of the art, with the humbler lovers of opera to fill the cheaper parts (which they gladly do), constitute the only reliable support for the "grand season" as we are now getting it, thanks to the enterprise of the London Opera Syndicate.

This distinction is not sufficiently borne in mind. You may find a permanent home for opera if you can procure the necessary million or two for the purpose (if, mind!); and you may even fill the house fairly well for ten or eleven months out of the twelve. But, with all that in favour of the institution, it would be impossible to give performances approaching in quality, in all-round perfection of ensemble, those which are now sustained for a couple of months at Covent Garden by the *élite* of the lyric stage. There would be advantages of another kind, of course, and of the two things—permanent national opera or periodical luxurious grand opera—I have little doubt that the former would ultimately prove of greater value to musical art and education in this country. In the meantime, however, we ought to be thankful for what we are getting. It is the best that is to be had; and in opera, as in everything else, the best was never too good for London. It is on a par with the standard that has been maintained here for the last 150 or 200 years. The operas have changed, the taste has changed, the quality of the vocal performers has changed; but in principle the nature and class of the entertainment remains the same. If prices are double what they were, it is only in proportion to the universal rise in values and the increased terms demanded by artists, orchestra, chorus, stage-carpenters and everyone else engaged in the undertaking. In the operatic, as in every other business, you are obliged to cut your coat according to your cloth.

These and other cognate thoughts crowded into mind as I took my seat on the opening night of the fiftieth season of Royal (or erstwhile Royal Italian) Opera that I have attended at Covent Garden in the capacity of professional critic. The scene alone had undergone no change: the same brilliant picture; the same well-dressed crowd; different personalities, fewer distinguished notabilities, certainly fewer Royalties—that was all. Yes, the same old glorious National Anthem to inaugurate the proceedings at what in by-gone days would have been considered the unearthly hour of 7.15. The very early commencement had been necessitated by the choice of that inordinately long opera, *Der Rosenkavalier*, which, including two 20-minute *entr'actes*, occupies exactly four hours in performance. It should not be

more trying on that account than *Tristan* or *Götterdämmerung* or *Les Huguenots*; and yet somehow it seems to be, because the incidents of the final act are unduly spun out and reach a degree of attenuation that leaves the dramatic interest very bare indeed. One grows tired, not of the music, which includes that magnificent trio for the women, but of the Baron Ochs von Lerchenau and all his Falstaffian "goings on."

If not the best performance of *Der Rosenkavalier* that has been heard here, it did not fall far short of it. Certainly the singing could not have been finer, nor the acting of the principal parts. Mme. Lotte Lehmann was an ideal Marschallin, alike as to appearance, manner, and every sort of vocal attribute. Mme. Delia Reinhardt, though she never makes me forget Eva van der Osten, improved upon her Oktavian of a year ago; and Mme. Elisabeth Schumann remained the Sophie of one's dreams. To assert that the Baron Ochs of Richard Mayr was on a level with these embodiments is to pay him the highest possible compliment; he seemed once more to have been "resurrected" bodily from the naughty Vienna of 1750. No wonder this is a costly opera to produce. There are twenty characters, and even the smallest require artists to do them justice; while certain of the "supers" must have special training for the comic scenes at Faninal's House and the business at the restaurant.

The performances of *Tristan und Isolde* and the first cycle of *The Ring* resembled in detail those of 1926 so closely that it would be equivalent to repetition if I even touched upon them now. Enough that the work done by Frida Leider, Maria Olczewska, Sigrid Onegin, Lauritz Melchior and Friedrich Schorr was worthy of artists whose names have for some time been familiar to readers of these pages. The potency of the Wagner spell shows no signs of diminishing, for the house has been uniformly sold out and the enthusiasm generally up to fever-heat. For my part I venture to doubt whether the existing operatic public will ever grow tired of these all-absorbing music-dramas. At the same time it is worthy of note that German audiences, who certainly do not love them less than we do, always turn from them with pleasurable relief to the purer atmosphere of Mozart. The example for this, as a change after Bayreuth, was set years ago at Munich; and we had the same experience more or less at Covent Garden in the revival on May 4th of *Il Seraglio* (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*).

I am under the impression that it was the first time the opera had ever been given at this house in German, that is to say, the original text. I remember it there in Italian so far back as 1881, when it was revived for Marcella Sembrich: and also as recently as the winter season of 1922-3, when it was given in English under Eugène Goossens by the B.N.O.C.: but never between these years, save at His Majesty's in

1910 by the Beecham Company. One can enjoy its humour, delicacy and Mozartian lightness of touch best in a small theatre. I candidly confess that I always feel a shiver when I hear the performers suddenly dropping into spoken dialogue at Covent Garden, although I really prefer it elsewhere to the Italian patter of the *recitativo secco*. Either one or the other is, of course, indispensable for the rapid speech of the comic characters and the scenes wherein Osmin, the major-domo (or chief eunuch) of the harem, is so pleasantly fooled. These semi-farcical incidents afford a delightful contrast to the serious side of the story, which concerns the rescue of Constanze, the lovely captive of Selim Pasha, by her faithful adorer Belmont, with the aid of the sprightly pair, Blonda and Pedrillo. Most wonderful of all is the inimitable and well-nigh miraculous art with which the master-hand has fitted music of exactly the right kind to both aspects of the plot. Each in turn holds you under a spell—the Mozart overflowing with light-hearted jollity, and the Mozart expressing tragic emotion through flights of grandeur and *fioriture* for Constanze, as he was afterwards to do for Donna Anna and the Queen of Night.

Only an artist of the first rank can do real justice to this part, and it was rather disappointing to find that Maria Ivogün, who is justly entitled to be considered to the tip-top category, was not in her best form. It was only a passing indisposition, no doubt (she proved that, I was told, when the opera was repeated a few nights later), but sufficient to prevent the clever vocalist from adding brilliancy and truthful intonation to her skilful rendering of the long and difficult aria *Martnen aller Arten*. It will be remembered that I have already had occasion to eulogise her fine record of this piece. At Covent Garden the florid passages were beautifully executed, but unluckily the tendency of the artist most of the time was to sing sharp. She was much better, however, in the quartet that concludes the act. On the other hand, the Blonda, Elisabeth Schumann, was throughout up to the level of the best achievements credited to her alike on the stage and on the gramophone. The tone was under perfect control, its quality exquisite, and the spirit of every bar and every scene reflected in singing and acting worthy of the *vraie comédienne*. Her teasing coquetry and skittish fun in the episode with Osmin found a splendid foil in the impersonation of Paul Bender, which was simply ideal. The tenor airs for Belmont were made the most of by Karl Erb, who signalized a promising début; while Wilhelm Gombert no less accurately followed tradition in the lively rôle of Pedrillo.

Both the performances above noticed were conducted by Bruno Walter, a musician and a *chef-d'orchestre* of supreme ability, whose sole weakness is that he is occasionally apt to obscure his beat instead of marking the rhythm with the utmost clearness. It is true that his men understand him, but

for perfect orchestral playing it does not do to take too much for granted. The fault, if it can be called one, was more conspicuous in the *Rosenkavalier* than in the vastly less complex score of the *Entführung*, which was interpreted with irreproachable refinement and grace. The other German conductor, Robert Heger, has fully confirmed the favourable impression he created here last year.

It was pleasant to watch the "serried ranks" of a packed house listening, silent and absorbed, to the long performance of *Parsifal*. The scenes of the Flower Maidens' Enchantment and the Good Friday Spell were as beautifully done as any I have experienced since Bayreuth; but elsewhere it was possible to pick holes. Headed by Elisabeth Schumann, the damsels entrusted with the vain task of fascinating Parsifal warbled and glided with exceptional grace and charm, whilst lending all possible effect to the lovely music—the most grateful for the voice in the whole sacred drama. Truth to tell, all the cream of this marvellous score is allotted to the orchestra, concentrating therein the whole essence of the spiritual idea and its dramatic development. For the principal characters there are only rare moments of vocal beauty, such as Wagner furnished in his pre-Nibelungen days or even in the tetralogy itself. That Gurnemanz can be an inveterate bore no impartial critic will deny; and I confess that Richard Mayr was unable, with all his art, to prevent a repetition of this impression. In the first act the Ancient Mariner was nothing to him, and for the Good Friday music he had not the sustained power. Lauritz Melchior as Parsifal was also better in the later scenes, but nowhere was he up to the level of many Parsifals I have heard. He was too ponderous, anyhow, for the "pure fool" at his youthful stage. On the other hand, Goete Ljungberg is an almost ideal Kundry. Tall, refined, restrained in feeling, she acts that difficult character admirably, and sings it with much beauty of voice, significance of inflexion, and clearness of diction. I thought her scene with Parsifal in the magic garden greatly improved by her moving about and not remaining the whole time like an invalid on her couch. Her voiceless facial expression and her gentle, deliberate movements in the touching episode where she imitates the Magdalene by washing Parsifal's feet and drying them with her hair—all this was exquisitely done with the utmost reverence and with genuine feeling. The other parts were in safe hands, and the orchestra under Robert Heger achieved better results on the whole than the worthy Knights in their Grail scenes.

The revivals of *Fidelio* and *The Huguenots* I look forward to writing about next month; also the production of *Turandot*, which is expected before the middle of June. Meanwhile, I may say that the financial results of the season so far are exceeding all expectations.

HERMAN KLEIN.

GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

XVII.—Geraldine Farrar

By H. McLENAN-BURROS

SEVERAL years ago, long before I had any thoughts of buying a gramophone, I chanced to go to a local cinema. I had no idea what the programme was, and the "big" picture had started, so I had not seen the list of players. It was called "The Turn of the Wheel." The story is immaterial, but I was struck with the chief actress. She was a strikingly handsome woman. Her jet black hair was drawn severely away from her face; she had flashing eyes, a brilliant smile, and except that an intense vitality radiated from her, her profile might have been that of a Greek statue. I waited until the picture came round again, and then I discovered that her name was Geraldine Farrar.

A few days after this I happened to mention the picture to a musical friend, and then I learnt that in addition to her being a film star, Miss Farrar was also a prima donna of the very first magnitude. He took me to his home and played for me two of her records. One of these was the big aria from *La Tosca*—*Vissi d'arte e d'amore*, and I was particularly struck by the intensity of the singing.

I immediately wrote to Miss Farrar at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, and begged her to send me an autographed photograph of herself as "La Tosca." In a few weeks a large photograph arrived, but not as "La Tosca." Accompanying the photograph was a charming note from the star herself, expressing regret that "Tosca" portraits were out of print, but that later on when they were reprinted, she would send one—a promise since fulfilled—and would I accept the enclosed one, a film portrait, instead.

Shortly after this, I bought my first gramophone, and purchased, among others, a number of Miss Farrar's records. In addition to this, I read up in all the available musical books, periodicals, etc., all I could find about Miss Farrar.

She was born at Melrose, in Massachusetts, in February, 1882, and very early showed signs of considerable musical ability. Her first song in public was at the age of twelve, when she sang *Connais-tu le pays?* She herself says that she sang it very badly. How well she came to sing it we can now testify by the lovely record with the violin obligato by Kreisler, No. D.B. 173. In 1899 she went to Paris, but shortly afterwards she went to Berlin and put herself in the hands of Lilli Lehmann. She could have gone to no better teacher.

Lilli Lehmann is one of the greatest, if not the greatest singer the world has seen. She could sing

any role, ranging from Carmen to Isolde. I might mention she is still alive and still teaching. Miss Farrar, who visited Munich and Salzburg for the festivals last year, paid a flying visit to her old teacher, and found her "at seventy-eight years of age, as vigorous as ever in her classes." So it is not to be wondered at that, in such hands, Miss Farrar attained such perfection of style. That Miss Farrar is fully alive to what she owes to Lilli Lehmann is testified in her own words, which are:—"It is a privilege to be born in the same century as Lilli Lehmann."

Miss Farrar made her début at the State Opera House, Berlin, in 1901, as Marguerite in *Faust*, and was an instant success. She became the rage of Berlin. Her lovely voice, beautiful appearance and exceptional histrionic ability all combined to make her an unique figure among prima donnas, who do not generally possess all these three attributes.

It was during her reign at the State Opera House, Berlin, which lasted until 1906, that Miss Farrar made her first records. None of these are on any of the current lists, except three duets with Carl Jorn, tenor, which appear on the German H.M.V. list. I have several of these records in my possession and they are particularly fine, and the recording, although not up to new standard, is very good indeed. They include the *Waltz Song* from *Roméo et Juliette*, sung with delicious abandon, *Sempre libera* from *La Traviata*, *Caro mio ben*, *Dear Heart*, and *Cherry Ripe*.

Meanwhile, America was at last beginning to wake up to the fact that in Europe was an American prima donna who was rapidly becoming a world figure, and efforts were made to secure her services for the Metropolitan. In 1906, to the consternation of the habitués of the Berlin State Opera House, Miss Farrar announced her intention of returning home to America to make her début at the Metropolitan Opera House. She chose the part of Juliet in Gounod's opera *Roméo et Juliette* for her début, which was a triumphant success, so much so that for the next fifteen years she was the acknowledged "Queen of the Metropolitan."

The number of leading parts she played is astounding. To each she brought the same care and superb artistry. She was the first Madama Butterfly at the Metropolitan, and in order to get an authentic Japanese appearance and manner, she consulted as many books on Japan as it was possible to obtain. Similarly, when studying the part of Elizabeth in



GERALDINE FARRAR

Tannhäuser, Miss Farrar visited many picture galleries in Germany in order to cultivate the expression in the eyes which she considered so essential to the correct portrayal of this difficult role. In connection with this latter role, I would mention her lovely record of Elizabeth's Prayer (Victor 88053), unfortunately now deleted from all the catalogues.

One of her finest roles was that of Marguerite in *Faust*. A friend of mine once saw her in this part with Caruso as Faust and Chaliapine as Mefistopheles, at Monte Carlo. What a trio! All Miss Farrar's *Faust* records are good, particularly some of the concerted ones with Caruso and Journet. It is perhaps interesting to note that she made two records of the Jewel Song. I had the original single-sided 12-inch record, and then, when the H.M.V. Company double-sided their celebrity records, wishing to possess her record of *Le roi de Thule*, I bought the double-sided copy, only to find that the Jewel Song, on the reverse side, was quite a different recording. Personally, I preferred my single-sided copy in which she interpolates two delicious little laughs, so thoroughly in keeping with the naive delight that Marguerite must have felt when adorning herself in the jewels. Similarly, I discovered that Miss Farrar made two records of *Vissi d'arte*, *Un bel di vedremo* and *Ancora un passo*, the last two being from *Madama Butterfly*. Possibly there are other examples of this duplication.

Perhaps her two most famous roles are *Madama Butterfly* and *Carmen*. In the first of these she was supreme. Other singers may have sung the role as well as Miss Farrar, certainly no one has sung it better, but as a dramatic interpreter of this tragic little heroine no singer has approached her. Her death scene was one of the most realistic seen on any stage, operatic or otherwise. In fact, many critics agree that no prima donna can equal Miss Farrar at dying on the stage. All her records from this opera are good, particularly the entrance scene, H.M.V. D.A. 204, the duet with Caruso, D.M. 110, and the flower duet with Louise Homer, D.K. 125. Miss Farrar did not attempt *Carmen* until November, 1914. Since Calvé had left the Metropolitan, some years previous to this, *Carmen* had never been revived with any success. In this production Miss Farrar was supported by Caruso as Don José, Amato as Escamillo, and Frances Alda as Micaela. So great was the success of this revival that *Carmen* was given twelve times in that season alone. Her records from this opera are most characteristic. Her *Chanson Bohème*, D.B. 245, is a marvel of abandonment, and her duets of the finale with Martinelli have already been mentioned by the Editor in a previous issue as perhaps the most dramatic records issued. Herein you have one of the characteristics of Miss Farrar's records. More than any other artist does she manage to convey the sense of drama in her records. In this connection I would draw particular attention to the

following records in addition to those already mentioned: D.B. 654, *Mefistofele—L'altra notte*; D.K. 111, *La Bohème*—duet with Antonio Scotti; D.K. 109, Church Scene from *Faust*—duet with Marcel Journet; and D.A. 211, *Il segreto di Susanna*, these being a few worthy of special attention.

Many an opera has owed its success entirely to the fact that Miss Farrar created the leading role, and several operas which had hitherto been neglected have had their initial success for the same reason. An instance of the latter is *Zaza*, by Leoncavallo. This opera, although the composer considers it his masterpiece, had never taken a permanent place on the repertoire until Miss Farrar played the title role at the Metropolitan, when it became the rage, and many performances were given.

Miss Farrar has also a great reputation as a singer of Mozartian roles, her chief parts being Cherubino and Zerlina. So great was her success in these roles that she sang them at the Salzburg festival in 1914. Her records of these are excellent. The *Voi che sapete*, her duets with Scotti, *La ci darem* and *Crudel perche Finora*, are on our own list, but I also have her lovely record of *Batti, batti o bel Masetto*, which is now deleted from all lists.

Miss Farrar is also a very great favourite in Paris, particularly as an interpreter of Massenet. She is exceptionally lovely in the part of Manon, and her record of the Gavotte (D.A. 510) is quite the finest record in existence of this excerpt. Although she appeared with great success as *Thaïs*, she herself says, "I never cared greatly for the opera, or myself in it." During her visits to Paris Miss Farrar became an ardent admirer of Joan of Arc, and collected much information about this heroine, and when in 1916 she made her famous film of "Joan, the Woman," this information was of great value to the producers. She also made a film version of "Carmen," which was her first film, and a real living, vital Carmen she was.

There seems to be no end to the versatility of Miss Farrar. Quite recently I received several beautiful songs by Rachmaninoff, for which she has written the English versions.

Miss Farrar has all a true artiste's feelings. She has a very high standard indeed. One of her regrets about the younger generation of singers is the undoubted fact that so few of them study sufficiently. They seem to think that a year or two's study is sufficient to make them great artistes. As Miss Farrar writes:—"Of lovely voices there are many, but all too rare is the intelligence to carry them over all the pitfalls and difficulties." On another occasion she writes:—"Although I have sung Schumann's *Der Nussbaum* over a hundred times, I still find new beauties that escape me." Again:—You will find the beautiful songs of Brahms, Schubert, Franz and Hugo Wolf a never-failing inspiration."

Owing probably to the fact that Miss Farrar has never appeared at Covent Garden, a number of the

records she has made for the Victor Company have never appeared on the English H.M.V. catalogue. Among these are several that call for special mention as being particularly good. They are: *None but the lonely heart*, by Tchaikovsky (Victor No. 623, 10-inch), *Madrigal*, by Chaminade, coupled with *La Serenata*, by Tosti (Victor No. 953, 10-inch), and her beautiful duet with Schumann-Heink of Rubinstein's *Wanderer's Nightsong* (Victor 87504, 10-inch, S.S.).

Finally, there are a number of records that have been now deleted from the Victor Catalogue, but which are in my own opinion among her finest records. They are to be found on the Victor Historical Catalogue, and include:—

12in. 88424 *O gioia la nube leggera.* (*Il segreto di Susanna.*)
 12in. 88356 *Tutta per te mio bene.* (*Donne Curiose.*)
 12in. 88126 *Batti, batti, o bel Masetto.* (*Don Giovanni.*)
 12in. 88405 *Lieber Spielman.* (*Königskinder.*)
 12in. 88125 *Nymphs et Faunes.* (*Bemberg.*)
 10in. 87126 *Alleluja.* (Mozart—a model of clean coloratura singing.)
 10in. 87127 *Wonnevoller Mai.* (*Sieber.*)

One of Miss Farrar's latest ventures is to tour her own company in her own version of *Carmen*. She has

made two triumphant tours in the United States and Canada, playing the role to packed houses over two hundred times. She eliminated the somewhat unnecessary chorus and dressed the opera so magnificently that the critics have been enthusiastic in their praise.

H. MCLENAN-BURROS.

[Note.—An article on somewhat similar lines written by Dr. C. de Villiers of Stellenbosch, South Africa, contains the following passage:—It is a matter of history that Farrar made her début in coloratura roles but towards the end of her Metropolitan career she attempted lyrical and lyric-dramatic roles only. Technically her voice is characterized by its great evenness and its judicious mixture of "whiteness" and "coveredness." That this is due to Lilli Lehmann's training must be obvious to anyone who knows this famous singer's principles of voice production. Farrar's pronunciation of Italian, French and German was very commendable without being in any sense perfect. She found special difficulty apparently with the long German *e* as in "Flehen" and with the French *é*: these vowels, and the Italian *e* in words like "mare," she was inclined to pronounce like the English *ay*. She was not very successful with the French *u* and the German *ü*, which seems to be particularly difficult to pronounce if it does not occur in one's home language.

Dr. de Villiers gives as the first class from the English H.M.V. catalogue, approximately in order of merit: D.B.246, D.B.172, D.M.110, D.B.245, D.K.111, D.K.108, D.A.508, D.O.101, D.B.244 and D.K.106.—Ed.]



Beethoven in Vienna, March 26-31, 1927

By JOHN NOBLE

ON Friday, March 25th, many people were collected in Vienna to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Beethoven's death. Some were received officially by the President of the Austrian Republic, others were not; but that is not important. On the evening of the 26th the Festival started with what was virtually a ballet performance in the Opera House. This started with Gluck's Ballet *Don Juan*, re-scored for the occasion, which was pleasant music if not very profound. The arranger had evidently not forgotten Mozart's use of the trombones in his scoring for those instruments at the appearance of the statue; besides this there was one pizzicato movement which was played to perfection, and a delicious flute solo with a pizzicato accompaniment. The dancing and setting were as good as they could be, and were by no means the least important part of the affair.

There followed a new arrangement of the *Ruins of Athens* by Strauss and Hofmannsthal, the author of *Der Rosenkavalier*. This proved to be the *Ruins* and also the *Prometheus* ballet, for the first scene was a condensed version of the *Ruins* while the second was an arrangement of the *Prometheus* ballet music. In the former the familiar chorus of Dervishes and Turkish march came out well, and there was a spoken

dialogue by the German student, with an orchestral accompaniment of Straussian flavour, in which some effective use was made of a theme from the finale of the Fifth Symphony. The ensuing ballet was entertaining, though to see the people gaily dancing to the theme, which Beethoven used in the finale of the *Eroica*, was odd, to say the least. The performance closed with a sort of pageant of Athens resurrected, to suitable music!

At twelve the next day the *Missa Solemnis* was given in the large hall of the Concert House, which is a most magnificent place. Dr. Schalk conducted, and Elisabeth Schumann, Rosette Anday, Hermann Gallos and Richard Mayr sang the solos. The chorus was not very large, but was none the less effective for that. Particularly noticeable was the way in which the solo voices "came through" the orchestra. Dr. Schalk must get high praise for this. In the evening Goethe's *Egmont* was given in the Opera House with Beethoven's music. For the overture Weingartner used no less than eight horns to an ordinary sized orchestra, presumably to ensure a "heroic" result. Unfortunately, the effect so produced was of a concerto for eight horns with a somewhat insignificant orchestral accompaniment. Lotte Lehmann sang Clärchen's two songs, but apart from the exquisite

page or so of music accompanying Clärchen's death the musical interest was not large.

The next concert did not contain a single work of Beethoven's, which perhaps is strange on such an occasion, but the object was to show the music of Beethoven's teachers and predecessors. A small picked orchestra, under Robert Heger, played Fux's *Suite in B flat*, which was quite palatable, and the accompaniment to G. M. Monn's *Cello Concerto in G minor*, which not even Casals could save from being musically dull. Alice Ehlers played on the harpsichord Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in D major* from Book I, Handel's *Harmonious Blacksmith* (which must have been tolerably familiar at least to the English members of the audience!) and an Overture, Air and Finale from a suite by Muffat, with a Bach Italian concerto as "encore."

The music most nearly resembling Beethoven's was the C. P. E. Bach *Pianoforte Sonata in F minor*, played by Dr. Paul Weingarten. Besides these there were two delightful wind divertimenti by Haydn and Mozart, both early works, a concertino by Albrechtsberger for oboe, violin, viola and 'cello, which quite belied his reputation for "dry-as-dust" pedantry, and four songs by Gluck and Neefe (Beethoven's teacher in Bonn), sung by Maria Gerhardt.

On Tuesday night there was such a chamber music concert as one does not often hear. Casals, Huberman and Friedman, brought together, played the great *Trio in B flat*, op. 97, in a manner that was quite unforgettable. The pizzicato strings in the first movement were remarkable, and their finish and balance throughout were really good. Many people wept during the slow movement and clapped for nearly a quarter of an hour at the end of the concert. Besides the Trio, Huberman and Friedman played the *Violin Sonata in G*, op. 96, of which the slow movement was best. Friedman played very well, giving just the right prominence to the piano part, and Huberman also, though his beautiful polished tone seemed a little out of place in some of the rougher moments. Casals and Friedman played the two superb *'Cello Sonatas*, op. 102. I liked the *C minor* the better of the two, especially the final fugue. It is good news to see that Columbia have recorded *A major*; might we not also have the companion *Sonata in C minor* and the *Violin Sonata*, op. 95?

The orchestral concert on the next day was the end and climax as far as concerts were concerned. The famous Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra performed under Weingartner and Casals. They played first a new discovered version of the *Second Leonora Overture*, which sounded rather like the third gone wrong and was certainly not so good. This was followed by the Eighth Symphony, conducted by Casals, which was not very satisfactory, perhaps partly because the orchestra did not respond very well to a strange

conductor. Anyway, the first movement went too quick, so that it became rather absurd, and the minuet was too meticulous. The Finale was a little better, but it was a pity that Weingartner did not conduct this Symphony, which he has made so particularly his own. Friedman then played the *Fourth Concerto in G* to some effect, receiving an enormous wreath after his effort! On the whole his rendering was good, if perhaps a little too "virtuous"; at least, his cadenza was better than the average. The concert was concluded, contrary to Beethoven's advice in the preface to the Symphony, by the *Eroica*! There was no applause or wait between the movements, and Weingartner's reading of the whole work was superb. He took the first movement at a good quick pace, getting faster at the climax with good effect. In the second movement the oboe was not quite prominent enough in one or two places, but the rest was good. The Scherzo went at a tremendous pace, and the Trio too fast, so that the horns quite lost their effect. True, Weingartner did seem to slacken speed a little at the end of the Trio to give the effect of more seriousness, but it was not sufficient. This was the only weakness. The Finale was a fitting ending to an extremely fine rendering of the Symphony. What a pity Weingartner did not record this Symphony for Columbia as well as the others.

The audiences at these concerts were quite unexpectedly ill-behaved, and no one need suppose that foreign audiences are much better than our own. One cause was that in this, the largest concert hall in Vienna, all the seats were plain wood without any padding, which makes people restless, but it does not account for the snatches of conversation, which were frequent. However, they cheered the conductor to the echo, and he had to come back some seven or eight times.

The Festival was ended by a gala performance of *Fidelio* in a new and very good setting. Lotte Lehmann took the main part and did it very well, with Piccaver as Florestan, Mayr as Rocco and Elisabeth Schumann as Marcellina. They made a very good quartet, and it was again noticeable that Dr. Schalk kept the orchestra just at the right force, so that it neither drowned the voices nor became inaudible. In between the last scenes Dr. Schalk gave a really thrilling rendering of the *Leonora No. III*.

JOHN NOBLE.

VOICE TRAINING

and

THE ART OF SINGING

For information and advice upon every branch of the Art, make an appointment with

Mr. Herman Klein

at his Studio Residence:

40, Avenue Rd., Regent's Pk., N.W.8
Telephone: Primrose Hill 0047

THE COMING REVOLUTION

IN October, 1925, we published an article under the above title with a mark of interrogation. It was a report of a speech by Mr. P. L. Deutsch, Vice-President of the Brunswick Company in America, describing the Panatrophe and the method of light-recording used for Brunswick records. "The disc record will be used at present," said Mr. Deutsch, "because we want to adapt the product to the use of millions of gramophones now in existence; but the reproduction can be done by films on which the sound waves are photographed. By this method the record can be made to play for any length of time. In order to reproduce the film records the instrument must be equipped with the apparatus for sending a beam of light through the film to a photographic cell, so as to turn the sound waves into electricity, after which the electrical waves are amplified by the valves. This apparatus, however, is not costly or cumbersome, and there is no reason why the device using the film records may not become an ordinary household musical instrument."

Last March we published an illustrated article on Phonofilms written by Mr. Herbert Parsons; and to him we are now indebted for particulars of a still later sound-film invention which comes from the laboratories of two Danish scientists, Axel Peterson and Arnold Poulsen, and is registered in this country under the name of British Acoustic Films. It is handled by the Gaumont Company, and the producing side is under the direction of Mr. James Metcalfe, by whose courtesy we were able to see some of the films which combine sound and picture. Those of "The Flying Scotsman" and of "Changing the Guard at Buckingham Palace" were most impressive, and could leave no doubt in the mind of any observer that the future of this development of recorded music is extremely promising.

Actually the first public use of British Acoustic Films was in connection with *Marigold*, the play produced by Mr. Simon Ord at the Kingsway Theatre, London. For this Mr. Metcalfe made at Aldershot a film of "noises off"—the march and music of full pipe bands, drums and bugles—which was run through a machine under the stage; the realism (as well as the economy effected by substituting a film for the actual pipe bands, etc.) stimulates the imagination with visions of the stage effects which we may expect in the future. How the apparatus of the Ghost Train might have been simplified, for instance!

Of the complete use of synchronized music and effects to accompany motion pictures it is not necessary to speak. For though this is presumably the primary occupation of the Company, what will interest readers of *THE GRAMOPHONE* more deeply is the use of the musical film by itself. It is not hard to foresee the time when we shall all possess a gramophone which will play the disc records which we shall still cherish, or can be used as a wireless loud speaker or as a loud speaker for films; and since the Panatrophe has been noticeably recommended for the first two purposes there is significance in the fact that Mr. Metcalfe uses a Rice-Kellogg loud speaker for demonstrating the films also. The co-operation in research work between the British Acoustic Films Co. and the British Brunswick Co. is full of promise for the gramophonist.

Mr. Herbert Parsons writes: "The entire available width of ordinary standard film, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches wide over all, is utilized for the sound record, which, when developed, is in the form of a continuous black jagged-edged strip extending roughly half-way across the film. It is the varying width of the black strip which constitutes the record." In the section of film illustrated on this page the size has been enlarged so as to show the subtlety of the outline more clearly. "The photographic record is imparted to the film by the response of a light to the electrical oscillations set up by a microphone which was

specially designed by the inventors of the system. To reproduce the original sound the film record is projected, as it unwinds, on to a small selenium cell, a bulb lamp usually being employed. Selenium, being a substance electrically sensitive to the action of light, transforms the ever-varying streak of illumination back into electrical oscillations, which, after suitable valve amplification, are able to actuate the diaphragm of a loud speaker. It should be noted, in passing, that the drawback of 'time-lag' associated with the use of selenium has happily been overcome.

"Unlike the gramophone disc, the playing time limit of which seems destined to remain at about four or five minutes, the film method of recording is governed only by the size of the spool boxes fitted to commercial projection apparatus; but even in present circumstances the system can give us a record lasting up to twenty minutes of music. With duplicate apparatus, of course, there is no reason why the time should not be extended indefinitely, to cover the



duration of an opera or symphony without any perceptible break at the 'change-over' from one machine to the other.

"British Acoustic Films claim that they can record more frequencies than have hitherto been recorded on any other system."

As to this claim no doubt more definite information will soon be available; but unless we are mistaken the illustration given above indicates a very wide range of frequencies, and probably the difficulty will be to find a loud speaker capable of responding to all of them.

Naturally some of our readers will suppose that at present there is no need to consider the film question

seriously; that the expense of the apparatus and the expense of the films will render them prohibitive to the modest purse; and that the music may not be any better than what we get on standard gramophones with the latest disc recording. There is doubtless something to be said for this point of view. But the rapidity with which events have moved during the last few months and the number of acute scientific brains which are engaged in solving the problem in conjunction with no less acute commercial brains leave little room for doubt that the mark of interrogation may safely be removed from the title of this article.



SAVOY OPERA RECORDS

By N. M. CAMERON

THIS is really the work of two of us, but my collaborator is too modest to allow his name to appear as it should. However, this allows me to explain that he used to play the leading parts in an extremely good amateur company—good in the absolute sense that is, not merely "good for amateurs"—and so, besides his intimate knowledge of Gilbert and Sullivan, he is able to lend me the benefit of his experience as a performer. This experience covers producing and the playing of practically all the more important male parts, and once, when the contralto was late in arriving, he had started to make up as Katisha! I find his opinion and information absolutely invaluable, so if I succeed in passing them on will readers of THE GRAMOPHONE please accord him a silent vote of thanks?

We had decided to take the operas in the chronological order of their first production on the stage, listening to them carefully with every care taken to have the right atmosphere—*The Sorcerer* on tea (but there are not many records of *The Sorcerer*), *The Pirates* on sherry (hastily substituted for rum at the last minute), and so on, when all of a sudden H.M.V. started to record them all over again by means of the electric process, beginning with *The Mikado*. At the moment we feel at a loss, not knowing in the least what is coming next and how soon, but probably our best plan is to stock the cellar against all emergencies and to proceed according to plan until the next set comes out, when we shall take cognizance of it with priority over all other considerations.

It must be unnecessary to give biographical details about either Sullivan or Gilbert. The D.N.B. gives as much as most people want, while for more detailed biographies *Gilbert, Sullivan and D'Oyly Carte*, by

Cellier and Bridgeman (1914), *W. S. Gilbert: his Life and Letters*, by Sidney Dark and Rowland Grey (1924), *Sir Arthur Sullivan and his Operas*, by B. W. Findon (1908), *Sir Arthur Sullivan, Life Story*, by A. Lawrence (1899), and *Arthur Seymour Sullivan*, by H. S. Wyndham (1926), in the "Masters of Music" series, may be suggested, but this is by no means a complete bibliography. *The Gilbert and Sullivan Journal*, as might be expected, is teeming with a lot of news, and there are also the articles in *Grove* and in other dictionaries and encyclopaedias, and many books written from either the historical or critical point of view, not to mention reminiscences. A. H. Godwin's *Gilbert and Sullivan: A critical appreciation of the Savoy Operas* (1926), summarizes their history and gives many interesting facts, but consists chiefly of discussions of unusual interest to the intimate connoisseurs. It also contains an introduction by G. K. Chesterton and a portrait.

Of texts, the most complete is the volume published by Macmillan last year. It even contains Pooh-Bah's petulant reply to the Mikado's kind inquiry whether they can wait till after luncheon, a line I have found in no other edition, though his echo of Katisha's "Mercy even for Pooh-Bah" is not given. Chappell's separate libretti, sold in the theatre, are good as well as handy. The four volumes of *Original Plays by W. S. Gilbert*, published by Chatto and Windus, contain a curious text of *The Sorcerer*; probably this was the original version, which Gilbert altered considerably for the revival in 1884. This edition omits Ko-ko's "Little List" song. I cannot remember any reference to this being interpolated after the original production, so the inference is that it was not in Gilbert's first draft. This would explain why

Ko-ko, when he actually requires a victim, appears to have forgotten all about his list, and no one reminds him of it.* Possibly, scholars will some day collate the *variae lexiones* in Gilbert's *Omnia Opera*. Sometimes, for instance, the Duke of Plaza-Toro "enjoys" an interment, sometimes he merely "likes" it. I suggest this as a congenial light duty for a Shakespearean scholar during convalescence after influenza.

Of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas only one full score has been published, that of *The Mikado*, but there also exists that of *Liebe an Bord*, the German version of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. In the case of the remainder only vocal and piano scores have been printed. (See appendix to Findon's *Sir Arthur Sullivan and his Operas*.)

Owners of player-pianos probably know already what rolls exist of Sullivan's music, but in case they do not, they may be interested to learn that a selected list is given in *The "Duo-Art" and "Pianola" Piano Monthly* for January, 1927.

Records may be divided into three categories: the complete sets issued by H.M.V., single airs (with or without chorus and the proper orchestral accompaniment), and "selections," including "vocal gems." As for cornet solos, accordion duets and similar by-blows, I disinterest myself in them entirely. I am not, however, one of the superior people who sneer at band selections. Even when a complete set is to be had, they may be very desirable for considerations of space or expense, and used to give untold pleasure during the war.† But they only give us Sullivan at second hand, with in many cases incorrect time and phrasing of the airs. It would seem a better plan to buy the overture, if recorded, of the opera in question, thus obtaining a selection of tunes arranged and orchestrated by the composer himself.

I can only apologize in advance and warn those who expect to be told the *best* record of something that has been recorded several times that they will be disappointed. The searching of catalogues is a wearisome business. I find my nerves getting affected, so that I start at seeing "Regal Sauce" on a menu! But still more trying is the task of seeking out the less accessible makes of records. I do not, however, wish to grouse about what after all affords most congenial employment, but to point out that although

(possessing myself the H.M.V. set) I sally forth and hear alternative records of a particular air, a Zonophone in Brixton, a Regal in Holborn and a Parlophone in Edgware Road, on different makes of machine and not necessarily all on the same day, I feel in the end that it would not be fair to say definitely that any one is the best. Moreover, a purchaser will be considering the price and what is on the other side, and, in any case, individual opinions differ widely. I shall be able to quote an apt case in point later on. But in general my conclusion is that it is seldom, if ever, that one can buy a better rendering than that in the complete set; on the other hand, I have not heard any record that I could not endure to have in my own collection. In fact, I have had some pleasant surprises at the quality of comparatively cheap records that must have been made (the masters that is; the pressings are presumably recent) a good many years ago, when played on a good machine. So I have done my best to mention all the recordings I can discover, which I honestly think is the most useful thing I can do.

Apart from selections, most lists only contain one or two airs, if any, from the operas, but the Columbia catalogue has quite a number, and Velvet Face has a whole page. Vocalion has started and will continue a series, all recorded by the Marconi Company's Electrical Process except X-9836 and X-9874 (*The Gondoliers* and *Iolanthe* respectively). And now I see that Parlophone have begun a similar series. All makers who issue alternative recordings have to steer very warily to escape proceedings under the Copyright Acts. They also, it will be noticed, confine themselves almost entirely to ten-inch records, which is a handicap.

N.B.—When the reverse of a record bears an extract from a different opera a reference is given, but no reference is given when both sides are from the same opera, as the other side is mentioned in the same paragraph, or when the other item recorded is not one of Sullivan's compositions. By the way, do we follow numismatists and say "obverse" and "reverse," or bibliographers with "recto" and "verso," or just say plain "front" and "back"? Perhaps the Editor will follow up his fulmination against "releases" with an utterance on this point.

Thespis. Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, December 23rd, 1871, under the management of J. Hollingshead. It was the first Gilbert and Sullivan opera. It might seem superfluous to mention it, as the name appears in no catalogue, but actually it can claim the original ownership of the chorus *Climbing over Rocky Mountains*, which was afterwards transplanted to *The Pirates*. No score of *Thespis* has ever been published, but Sullivan has been suspected of having "lifted" more than this from it. The libretto is in the collected edition of Gilbert's plays published by Chatto and Windus. If Sullivan's music is only half as delightful as that he wrote for *Cox and Box* five years earlier, surely it would be worth while recording some of it.

* I commend these two observations to Mr. Godwin: (1) The list was a fraud, or at any rate hypothetical: Ko-ko had no actual names under his various categories; (2) alternatively, in spite of his list Ko-ko (according to his own account) was a humane man and supposed his duties would be purely nominal, or (more probably, as we know how corrupt the administration was) having accepted the post in order to save his neck, he utterly neglected his duties with the result that there arrived that letter from the Mikado, of which we were so often reminded during the war by missives similar in both style and substance from such tremendous swells as D.A.A.Q.M.G. and D.A.D.O.S.

† The introduction of the Lewis gun, with its transport, was most welcome.

Trial by Jury. Produced at the Royalty Theatre, March 25th, 1875, under D'Oyly Carte's management. *The Judge's Song* was recorded on Col. 371, sung by Walter Passmore, with chorus. It is really excellent, but is no longer in the catalogue. There was once an H.M.V. record of it—I forget the singer—but it has also been withdrawn. I strongly advise people to go and hear what records by Passmore remain on sale. I had them all once, but unfortunately disposed of some, thinking it inconvenient to have extra records when I acquired the complete sets. Now I have hastily repurchased such as are available. A complete recording of this would be especially welcome and would have the advantage, there being no dialogue, of giving us the entire work. There is a rumour that it has been made, but at the moment only selections are obtainable, by H.M.V. (12 in. one side—*Sorcerer* on reverse), and by Vocalion and Zonophone (12 in., two sides in each case).

The Sorcerer. Produced at the Opéra Comique on November 17th, 1877. I have two records of *My Name is John Wellington Wells*, by Workman on Odeon 0676, and by Passmore on Col. 1866. (See *Gondoliers* and *Pirates* respectively for the other sides.) This must be the only instance, previous to the issue of records by Lytton, of two alternative records of the part. Unfortunately, Workman makes two or three verbal slips and at one point omits a line. Passmore is uninspired, and sings "posthumous" and "beology," but is otherwise blameless. The symphony as played for this record is correct. *The Vicar's Song* deserves to be considered a test song in Gilbert and Sullivan; on the face of it, it appears simple, but actually it is very difficult to sing well. Ranalow's record, which I found to my surprise in the Winner catalogue, 2414, is not good. Charles Mott (H.M.V. E. 71, wrongly labelled *The Curate's Song*) takes some liberties with the melody, and misses some points in the phrasing, but his breath-control is extremely good. Rutland Barrington tells in his reminiscences how a critic wrote, "Barrington is perfectly wonderful. He always manages to sing about one-sixteenth of a tone flat; it's so like a vicar." An H.M.V. record of one of Alexis's rather dull ballads is now withdrawn, as also a double-sided Coldstream Guards selection, but there remains a selection on the reverse of *Trial by Jury*, and Columbia and Vocalion have double-sided selections.

It is improbable that *The Sorcerer* is anyone's favourite, yet it should certainly have a good sale if recorded in full. Though the action moves a little stiffly—which is surprising after the spontaneity of *Trial by Jury*, but the authors seem to have considered the advance to two acts a very solemn proceeding—there are some beautiful numbers, for example the Pointdextre-Sangazure duet and the quintet in Act II, and one notices the germ of many things afterwards so successfully developed.

The remaining Gilbert and Sullivan operas, except

Utopia Limited and *The Grand Duke*, have been recorded in full by H.M.V., first *The Mikado* (published in March, 1918), then *The Gondoliers*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Ruddigore* and *Princess Ida*, in that order. The later issues, as one would expect, gained by improved processes of manufacture, although *The Mikado* was better than its two immediate successors. All were done before the electric process came into use. There was another gain, in interpretation, as members of the actual D'Oyly Carte Company were gradually introduced. All are stated to have been recorded under the direction of Mr. Rupert D'Oyly Carte. Mr. Arthur Wood conducted *The Mikado* and *The Gondoliers*, and I believe I am right in saying Mr. G. W. Byng has conducted the rest, although no conductor's name is given in the case of *H.M.S. Pinafore* and those following.

However many times one has seen the operas one does not cease to go because they have been recorded. But with a gramophone it is possible to follow the libretto and so discover many flashes of Gilbert's wit that do not get across the footlights; also to hear the lovely overtures in peace and quiet, and much incidental music—e.g., that for any of Lytton's entrances—that is drowned by applause. It is a notorious vice of the British public to talk not only during overtures but even during performances, and also, a maddening habit, to applaud before a song or an act is finished, although one would have thought the enthusiastic worshippers of Gilbert and Sullivan would have had better taste. I often wonder how many of the audience realize that there is a chorus being sung at the entrance of Jack Point and Elsie. Another obvious advantage of gramophone records is that they allow one to have encores *ad lib.* or not at all, exactly as one pleases, or even to omit something, though that may seem unthinkable!

H.M.S. Pinafore. Produced at the Opéra Comique, May 25th, 1878. This is a good all-round recording, with a large proportion of D'Oyly Carte artists in the cast. Two good tenors share the part of Ralph Rackstraw. The scene at his first entrance, *The Nightingale*, etc., is perhaps the best record in the set, soloist, orchestra and chorus all being very good. In the duet *Refrain, audacious tar* the solos are good but the ensemble bad. Another passage where the tenor is to blame is in the finale, Act I, where he overburdens the trio. Violet Essex uses her voice with great discretion, and sings *The hours creep on apace* brilliantly. Sydney Granville is hardly so good as one would expect of a real Savoyard. In the Captain's song he is perhaps let down by the mechanical chorus, but all through he is hardly more than adequate. However, he sings the *Englishman* song well; one takes the singer to be Granville from the resemblance of the voice as it comes out, but the label only gives three men's names for four parts in

this scene, Ralph, Captain, Deadeye and Boatswain. Frederick Hobbs, whose name appears here only, is presumably Deadeye. One expects Bertha Lewis and Darrell Fancourt to be first rate, and Ranalow, whom one would like to see in a Gilbert and Sullivan part, is a success as the First Lord. The trio *Never mind the why and wherefore* is capitally sung, and is followed by an excellent rendering of the duet *Kind Captain, I've important information*. The chorus is mechanical at times but sings well, especially in the difficult *Gaily tripping*, and in the scenes *This very night* and *Carefully on tip-toe stealing*. There is a most regrettable cut, namely, the second verse of that delightful glee *A British tar is a soaring soul*, in which Halland, the bass, comes out very well. There is also a small cut at the end of *Things are seldom what they seem*. On the other hand, the B flat in "I have dared to love your matchless girl" is not in the score, which has G natural. The orchestra plays and records well throughout, the instrumental reproduction having improved considerably by the time this set was issued.

There is only one alternative recording, *Little Buttercup*, not very well sung by Carrie Herwin, on Col. 3150. (See *Mikado* for reverse.) There were a large number of older H.M.V. records all withdrawn on the publication of the complete set, and I once had, but parted with, a record of Passmore singing *When I was a lad*, of which I am now regretting the loss. Columbia has a double-sided 12 in. orchestral selection and also a single-sided 12 in. with vocal gems on the back. Of band selections there are 12 in. double-sided by H.M.V. and Parlo., 12 in. one side (*The Pirates* on reverse) by Vocalion, 10 in. double-sided by Aco, Beltona, Columbia, Duophone, Regal and Winner, and 10 in. one side (*The Pirates* on reverse) by Zonophone.

The Pirates of Penzance. Produced at the Opéra Comique, April 3rd, 1880. This was the fourth to be recorded in full. Derek Oldham had been brought in for *The Yeomen*, issued immediately before this, but the Company did not yet go any further towards employing the actual performers. The overture is complete and well played, but on the next record we find a deplorable cut, the second verse of the Pirate King's song. There was an old record, also H.M.V., with the opening chorus and as much of this song. The girls' chorus, "lifted" as already described from *Thespis*, is very well recorded, except that Edith is just a little off her note and the chorus find the top notes trying. Oldham sings "This evening I renounce my wild profession" jerkily in dotted quavers and semi-quavers, whereas it is written smoothly in quavers. Someone comes in too soon with "Tis Mabel." Violet Essex in *Poor wandering one* takes liberties with the time where no liberties are or should be allowed. They might be allowed in parts of a song which is a "take off" of grand opera coloratura, but she takes them in the other parts. The following chorus, *How*

beautifully blue the sky, etc., one of Sullivan's beloved double choruses, was a particular favourite of his, and is excellently sung and recorded, but the subsequent ensemble, *Here's a first-rate opportunity*, is rather slow. I have always thought Baker's singing of the Major-General's song* his best effort. It ought, however, to have been accompanied with a full orchestra: one should hear the jingle and trotting of cavalry in the last verse, "For my military knowledge," etc. From there to the end of the Act the only points to notice are that the chorus is not large enough for *Hail, Poetry*, and that Radford takes a middle instead of a low C at "elect you."

The lovely introduction to Act II is all included. In the opening chorus the altos are slow in coming in; otherwise it is very nicely done. *When the foeman bares his steel* is good except for insufficient material, the girls' chorus lines appear to have been scamped in the ensemble, and the symphony is cut short at the beginning and omitted at the end. There was an old H.M.V. record of this with the correct symphonies, but omitting from Mabel's solo to the end of the Sergeant's; it also scamped the girls' chorus, the men overpowering them. There is more cutting of symphonies in the case of the *Paradox Trio*, and the King hurries his chant *For some ridiculous reason*, but the record is otherwise excellent. So is the very difficult *Away, away*. *Ah, leave me not* is perhaps the most beautiful piece in the opera. The singers, however, do not quite give the idea of deep and genuine true love. No doubt we are asking a lot, but it ought to be done perfectly. A minor point, Oldham's occasional indulgence in falsetto, occurs with the last top G on *loves*. But the ensemble "Oh, here is love" is excellent. Dawson is again good with *When a felon's not engaged in his employment*, and the alternative record by Walter Passmore can be recommended too. In the latter the bassoon comes out splendidly, and Passmore is very funny. *With cat-like tread* might be better. The orchestra should accompany piano with *fortissimo* at the stamps of the pirates. "Come friends" should be *pp* by the basses (police) and *p* by the pirates; as it is, when the latter should sing *ff* in the last nine bars, they cannot make the contrast. This section is written in strong light and shade, but here is sung in twilight throughout. Again, the chorus has no light and shade during *Softly sighing*; but the soloist is excellent.

It is really a very good set, with these faults here and there in details, which I think it is worth while pointing out. It is consistently well recorded, a distinct improvement on its predecessor.

The only alternative records I have discovered that are still extant are:—

When a felon's not engaged in his employment.

* In *The Life of Lord Wolseley*, by Sir F. Maurice and Sir G. Arthur, it is stated "Gilbert . . . poked fun at his attainments; and any doubt as to the amiable satirist's target was removed on the first night, when Mr. George Grossmith appeared . . . in a make-up instantly recognized."

Walter Passmore and chorus. (Omitted from index of Columbia catalogue. (See *Sorcerer* for reverse.) Col. 1866. Ditto, Stanley Kirkby and chorus, V.F. 1066. (See *Iolanthe* for reverse.)

Stay, Frederick, stay. Eleanor Jones-Hudson and Ernest Pike, Zono. 1025. (See *Iolanthe* for reverse.)

With cat-like tread. Stanley Kirkby and chorus, V.F. 1065. (See *Yeomen* for reverse.)

Selections. 12 in. d.s.—Col. (orchestral); 12 in. s.s.—Col. (orchestral, with "vocal gems" on reverse); Voc. (H.M.S. *Pinafore* on reverse), Zono. (*Iolanthe* on reverse); 10 in. d.s.—Aco, Regal, Winner, Parlo., Beltona, Col.; 10 in. s.s.—Zono. (H.M.S. *Pinafore* on reverse), Imperial (orchestral, with *Gondoliers* on reverse).

The Mikado. Produced at the Savoy, March 14th, 1885. In the old set (H.M.V., D.2—D.12) the overture, especially the second half, was the pick of the whole bunch, and Radford the pick of the artists. The tenor and soprano both seem a little flat in their top notes, and the tenor further lacks the sense of the opera which Oldham has. The second verse of Pish-Tush's song *Our great Mikado* was cut, and I am glad to find it restored in the new set, and there were a few minor ones as well.

The new set has every advantage, not only improved recording, but also the actual singers that we know in the theatre, available to no other recording company. There are, however, some small faults. Oldham in *A Wandering Minstrel I* is excellent and sympathetic, but uses falsetto at the end which should be unnecessary for so good a singer. Sheffield and Fancourt are neither of them vocally so good as Radford, but are first-rate nevertheless. Fancourt in the *Mikado*'s song "fair gives one the creeps," even though he cannot make such an excruciating "gulch" as Leicester Tunks used to do. Ko-ko is bound to lose most through being invisible, and Lytton seems to feel this. At any rate, he is inclined to be mechanical, delightful though he always is, even at a discount. As for the women, whereas Violet Essex sings *The Sun whose rays* with dramatic effect but flat, Elsie Griffin sings it blamelessly but with no dramatic effect at all. Bertha Lewis is first-rate, as one feels sure before coming to her. *Three little maids* is capitally sung and the Madrigal is heavenly, especially the piano, but the whole performance is extraordinarily good and sparkling, one good thing after another, in fact—with one serious blemish, the overbearing orchestra already referred to. There are certain variations from the original score, but in accordance with invariable stage practice; for instance, *So please you, Sir* as originally written included Pish-Tush as well as Pooh-Bah and the three Little Maids. In the finale a few bits of accompaniment are cut out to save time, but every word of the libretto is there apart from the dialogue.

Alternative renderings. These are numerous. Even if the Editor were willing to allow space, which I

doubt, it would be hopeless to attempt giving notes on them all. It must be admitted that in recording Gilbert and Sullivan, H.M.V. has the big battalions, the big guns and the big noise. It is only possible for other makes to attract for reasons of cheapness or convenience. Many of the extracts in the following list are cut or are sung without chorus. A name in brackets after the number of a record refers to an extract from a different opera on the back.

A Wandering Minstrel I. Cavan O'Connor and chorus, Voc. X 9962; Harold Wilde, Zono. 891 (*Yeomen*); Eric Courtland, Col. 3363; anon. with chorus, V.F. 1002.

Our Great Mikado. V.F. 1003.

Behold the Lord High Executioner; Taken from the County jail. Harold Williams and chorus, Col. 3150 (*H.M.S. Pinafore*); John Thorne and chorus, Voc. X 9962.

Were you not to Ko-ko plighted? Wilfrid Virgo and Elda May, Winner 2437.

Braid the Raven Hair. Anne Skidmore and chorus, Voc. X 9963.

The Sun whose rays. Violet Essex, Col. 3396; die Sonne lacht, Claire Dux, Polydor 72889 (not obtainable in Great Britain).

Brightly dawns our wedding day. Winner 2436; Voc. X 9978; Parlo. E.5783.

Here's a how-de-do. Passmore, Hilda Francis, Edward James, Col. 387; Savoy Singers, V.F. 1003.

Miya-sama; From every kind of man. V.F. 1000.

A more humane Mikado. Harold Williams, Col. 3363; anon., with chorus, V.F. 1002.

The criminal cried. Passmore, Carrie Herwin, Robert Howe, with chorus, Col. 387; Savoy Singers, V.F. 1004.

See how the fates. Savoy Singers, V.F. 1001 (*Haddon Hall*).

The flowers that bloom in the spring. Passmore and an unnamed tenor, with chorus, Col. 1818 (*Gondoliers*); Harold Williams (singing both verses), Col. 3827; Wilfrid Virgo and Robert Carr, with chorus, Winner 2436; O'Connor and Thorne with trio, Voc. X 9978.

Alone and yet alive. Marie Tillotson, Regal 6288; Carrie Herwin, Col. 3896.

Tit-willow. Robert Lett, Regal 6288; Stanley Kirkby, V.F. 1000; Harold Williams, Col. 3327; John Thorne, Voc. X 9979.

There is beauty in the bellow of the blast. Robert Carr and Amy Augarde, Winner 2437.

Finale, Act II, For he's gone and married Yum-Yum. Voc. X 9979.

Selections. 12 in. d.s., orchestral—Zono., Col., Parlo. 12 in. d.s., band—Voc., Regal, V.F., Parlo., H.M.V., Col. 12 in. s.s., orchestral—Col. ("vocal gems" on reverse). 10 in. d.s., band—Aco, Winner (four sides), Parlo. (four sides), Duophone, Beltona, H.M.V. (three sides), Col. 10 in. s.s., band—Regal, Imperial (*Patience* on reverse). N. M. CAMERON.

AT JETHOU

AT the last moment the Editor has failed with the review of records which should have appeared in this number. As usual, illness is the cause, and this has followed a time of severe strain. One assumes that, as in the early days of THE GRAMOPHONE, so now our readers like to hear the personal aspect of our activities, and will regard with an indulgent eye the domestic picture presented herewith and a brief description of a visit which I paid to

there are gramophone records perhaps, enough to fill a life-time with fine music and fine literature.

While staying on the island I never knew what time or what day it was. There were clocks which ticked and newspapers galore; but the times and dates which they suggested had no relevance. Meals appeared every now and then; one talked and walked in what seemed a timeless daylight; at one moment we were summoned to the top of the island to take



Jethou. I arrived at Guernsey in time to see the last performance of *The School for Scandal* by the newly-formed amateur society of the island. The Editor was not only playing Charles Surface, but had been directing the rehearsals for weeks beforehand; and the performance was, as *The Tatler* said, "unquestionably one of the best amateur productions anywhere of recent years." The credit was very largely his.

The next day we crossed to the island of Jethou, and I was able to enjoy two things which I had never seen before—the garden in all its glory and the new library, which the carpenter—a genius of a carpenter—had built during the last twelve months. It is completely lined with books, which give it an atmosphere of having been lived in for ages; as many books as

part in sports, at another we were dancing in the library to the gramophone; at another the Editor was reading his new play to us; at another lying prone on a couch listening to the test prints of the N.G.S. Ravel records. But whatever happened it was perfect weather, perfect companionship, perfect food; even the army of Siamese cats seemed a natural feature of the quiet fantastic island; and when, in the banality of the London office I remember the race of the tide between Crevichon and Jethou and the cry of the oyster catchers in the night, the view of Herm and Sark from the wood, and the foison of the walled garden in still sunlight, I wonder why we ever get any editorial contributions to THE GRAMOPHONE.

C. S.

UNRECORDED CHAMBER MUSIC—III

By WILLIAM MEADMORE

THE news that the N.G.S. propose to record the Dvorák Piano Quintet has naturally interested me, as I put in a very strong plea for this fine work in my first article. I understand that Miss Ethel Bartlett, a pianist who has had a wide experience of chamber music, is to play the piano part. No better choice could have been made. Although it is hardly germane to my subject, I should like to mention here that Ethel Bartlett and her husband, Rae Robertson, are unequalled in this country for their team work in playing compositions for two pianos, and the Recording Companies should note that a recording of the Brahms *Variations on a Theme of Haydn* in this genre is badly needed. The fact that the Dvorák Quintet is soon to be added to our shelves of records to be kept has set me speculating on other works which the N.G.S. might well undertake. I suppose the Schubert Octet is rather too ambitious; it would be a great feather in their cap to have recorded the first Octet as well as the first Sextet! I would also like to see the Franck Quintet done, but someone is bound to do this soon. I am more inclined to think that the N.G.S. would be truer to their ideals if they considered one of the Dohnanyi compositions, the Sibelius Quartet, the Chausson *Piano Quartet in A* (which I notice is among the Spencer Dyke repertoire), and for a native work why not Richard Walthew's splendid *Phantasy Quintet in E minor and major*? All these works have been previously discussed, therefore their merits need no elaboration. The Spencer Dyke also recently gave the first performance in England of McEwen's *Quartet in E minor*, which we have since repeatedly hungered to hear again. First impressions are notoriously fallible, but this Quartet certainly appealed to us as having "staying power" for many hearings, and it kept us listening the whole time. McEwen is thoroughly at home in the confines of the string quartet medium, and he always has something interesting to say, usually in a bold and forceful manner.

To revert, however, to chamber music works which are worthy of consideration for recording purposes by all and sundry, at least one more Piano Quartet should be mentioned. Although Hermann Goetz has barely been dead for fifty years his music is almost unknown to this generation. His Symphony is occasionally performed, his fine chamber music for-

gotten. The early *Quartet in E*, Op. 6, well deserves attention. Its duration is thirty-two minutes. The second movement consists of a *Langsam* (Air with Variations), and is particularly delightful. There is an open-air feeling about the whole Quartet and most of the themes are joyous in the extreme.

This brings us to the real backbone of the medium—the string quartet. Here the Companies have so drained on Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven that they will now surely have to break fresh ground. The Schumann Piano Quintet met with so much success that it is surprising that no other of his chamber works have been completely recorded. It is said that before he composed the three string quartets which comprise the Op. 41 set, he shut himself up with the scores of all Beethoven's quartets, and set himself resolutely to assimilate, as it were, their very essence. The Quartets are, however, unmistakably in the Schumann idiom, and frequently do we get that repetition of a phrase or melody at a different pitch several times in succession, one of Schumann's charming or irritating (whichever way you feel about it!) weaknesses. The first of the set in *A minor* is also the most popular and best known. It takes twenty-four minutes. In the *Adagio* the composer possibly achieved the height of his inspiration in writing for four stringed instruments. The independent writing for each part is very noteworthy. Gramophonists will well remember the "scale practice" in the *Scherzo* of the Piano Quintet and in the final *Presto* of this work there is a similar effect, scale passages in thirds being introduced. The second *Quartet in F* occupies some twenty-six minutes. There is a curious first movement. After the solitary subject has been given at length, the first three bars are time after time introduced by one instrument after the other, always at a two-bar interval. There is some dainty writing in the *Andante and Variations* which contains much syncopation. The last of the set is in *A*, and takes thirty minutes to perform. There is a characteristic and wholly delightful melody in the *Adagio Molto*, and this movement, containing as it does some of Schumann's most expressive writing, should certainly be recorded, even if the rest of the Quartet is ignored. The Quartet, however, hardly merits this mutilation.

(To be continued.)

Full particulars of the National Gramophonic Society can be obtained from the Secretary, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

THE ELGAR BIRTHDAY RECORDS

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1230 to 1235 (six 12in. records in album, 39s.)—**London Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by the Composer: *Second Symphony* (Elgar).
 D.1236 (12in., 6s. 6d.)—**London Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by the Composer: *Chanson de Matin*; and **Royal Albert Hall Orchestra**, also conducted by the Composer: *Chanson de Nuit* (Elgar).
 D.1242 (12in., 6s. 6d.)—**Royal Choral Society** and **Royal Albert Hall Orchestra**, conducted by the Composer: *Praise to the Holies* and *And now the Threshold*, from *The Dream of Gerontius* (Elgar).
 D.1243 (12in., 6s. 6d.)—The same **Choir** and **Orchestra**: *Go, in the name, and Come back, O Lord*, from *Gerontius* (Elgar).

Here is a small but timely and welcome celebration of Elgar's seventieth birthday, which occurs on June 2nd. The only other event I know of that is definitely a tribute of homage is the B.B.C.'s concert.

Perhaps the best way in which we can praise our famous men of music is just by keeping their works by us in gramophone or pianola form, and playing them frequently.

The love of fine music creeps into the heart thus, and if there is any soil fit to receive the plant, it is bound to grow and bear fruit.

It is rather a pity that in this seventieth year of his age our greatest composer's work is not yet fully represented in gramophone catalogues. We still lack records of the first symphony, *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom* (I know of only one or two short extracts from these oratorios), the violin sonata, the quartet, the smaller cantatas (except for a few pieces) and the fine part-songs. Is it too much to expect that these gaps shall be systematically filled?

The supreme value of Elgar to the man who will take him in is in his broad deep humanity. Look at his music from whatever angle you will, that is the spirit that informs and glorifies the whole. The sense of beauty behind it all is so strong and so intimate that I have always considered the enjoyment of Elgar at his best one of the touchstones of a man's musical taste. Like that for all good things, the taste needs cultivating; it may not lie on the surface of all men's feeling. To expect everyone to enjoy the deepest Elgar at once is inhuman. To fail to enjoy him when you really know him seems to me almost equally unnatural.

The little songs of night and morning on D.1236 are very happily done, so that we get the contemplative mood of the one and the confident freshness of the other, and a goodly measure of handsome melody in both.

The *Gerontius* extracts were taken from the performance of the work by the Royal Albert Hall Choir on February 26th last. The soloists are Margaret Balfour, Stewart Wilson and Herbert Heyner. The extracts cover the following pages of Novello's vocal score: *Go, in the name*—pages 41 to 54 (end of Part 1); *Praise to the Holiest*—pages 95 to 108 (leaving off, oddly, in the middle of a phrase); *And now the threshold*—pages 110 (bar 7) to 123 (end of top line—after the first word of a phrase); *Come back, O Lord*—page 168, bar 4 (again not at the beginning of the phrase) to end of work. I suppose the difficulty of starting the recording machine at exactly the right instant accounts for the little lapses in the end of one record and the start of another. In recording a public performance this probably cannot be avoided. Perhaps other records, joining up these extracts, may soon be issued.

The results here are better than might have been expected; but, frankly, we shall never get the best out of *Gerontius* or any other work in this way. The Albert Hall is no place for music. The Choir keeps together well, save for one moment's wryness. The orchestra is more effective here than it usually sounds in the hall. The Angelicals are heard in a seemly distance. Balance and colour are not ideal. Though we are glad to have the music, we should (I think it will be agreed by all

who know the work) have preferred to hear a performance by a smaller body in a more suitable hall.

The Second Symphony is now on twelve sides, instead of eleven, as in the older recording (which was reviewed by my former colleague P. P. on pages 190 and 191 of the September, 1925, issue). The references here are to the miniature score published by Novello. The records are in an album, with notes.

The first movement takes four sides, the second three, the third two, and the last three. The score is covered thus: Side 1, to page 14, bar 5; side 2, to page 29, bar 3; side 3, to end of page 46; side 4, to end of first movement; side 5, to end of page 65; side 6, to page 78, bar 3; side 7, to end of slow movement; side 8, to page 111, bar 28; side 9, to end of Rondo; side 10, to page 149, note 1; side 11, to page 169, bar 5; side 12, to end of work.

The second symphony is for most people far easier of immediate acceptance than the first. It has less mystery in it (though one doesn't immediately get at the heart of some of it—the nature of the Rondo, for instance); it does not suggest the sombre mood of the Shelley poem containing the lines "Rarely, rarely, comest thou, Spirit of delight," which are prefixed to it. Rather do we feel that that spirit descended upon the composer, and that the delight of creation was overflowing his heart as he wrote.

In the first movement, the potent sweep and swirl of the music catch us up at once. As my readers know, I am immensely thankful for the new recording methods, but take leave to doubt if they yet give us the *truest* tone, especially of the strings. This apart, I must praise this movement strongly. Elgar is a far finer conductor than one would think from seeing him at work. He gets from his men, on the second side of the first record, some of the best playing I have yet heard on a disc. The magnificent finish of the movement is well done, but it sounds just a little distant, and not quite so overpowering as it does in the concert room.

The second movement begins curiously loudly for *pp*. I have seen the start described as "in the character of a funeral march," but surely this is a mistake. Grave and dignified it is, but not funereal.

You might think of it as a rich old Venetian ceremonial scene, save that the continuation, in the sweet second melody, is in an entirely different mood, and is such as none but Elgar could have written. Its combination of nobility and depth of expression with a strong and bracing sweetness is his alone.

The Rondo seems to me one of the brightest examples in all music of rhythmic variety and homogeneity of conception. Few such pieces since Beethoven have so happily hit off these means of movement and graces of style, and the little shades of pace-variation with which Elgar holds this interpretation in the air and gives it impulse are delightful to hear. Altogether as nearly an ideal performance as I can imagine. There is a good deal more in this movement than can readily be grasped.

Why do the French not appreciate Elgar? Is it on account of the gusto and the rhythmic repetitiveness (as it superficially appears) that we get in such things as this last movement? Surely this is only one element of the Englishman. Elgar does not represent only the solidity and sense of the best type of Englishman (the Shakespearean Englishman, I mean), but also those other qualities—delicacy, fire and sensibility, with a certain venturesomeness and nobility—that must not be forgotten in thinking of the "typical" man of these islands. In this last movement is the best of our race's body and much of its soul.

The production of these records is such as to do a very large measure of justice to the great music. All lovers of fine music should mark the occasion by buying the set. It is worth a week's pay, and for heart-easing delight and stimulus of spirit you will be glad to put on some of these records when other favourites have lost their charm. These never will, for the music is of the stuff that endures.

K. K.





ORCHESTRAL

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1224 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, conducted by Blech: *Overtures to Figaro* and *Cosi fan Tutti* (Mozart).

C.1323 (12in., 4s. 6d.). De Groot and Piccadilly Orchestra: Selection from *Carmen* (Bizet, arr. Tavan).

C.1332 (12in., 4s. 6d.). Royal Opera Orchestra, conducted by Malcolm Sargent: Selection from *Turandot* (Puccini).

The opening of the *Figaro Overture* is a little muzzy, owing to the presence of the slight extraneous noise apparently inseparable from the new system of recording. Almost all else in the record pleases me well—the poise, the sense of dare-devil gallantry, with at the back of it all the enormous ease of a master at the top of his form. I should prefer to have the internal beauties of the orchestration made a little clearer. Again the hall's echo is a slightly disturbing factor. *Cosi fan Tutti* has, in addition, grace and a lighter elegance. This is uncommonly good Mozart playing. The orchestra has a first-rate classical sense; it would take long to tell what that phrase means, in all its fullness, but the sense is sufficiently rare among orchestras to-day to merit special praise.

De Groot's band plays with the somewhat loose rhythm of most restaurant combinations. The leader's fiddling is a bit sketchy at times. It is well to mention this matter of rhythm, which is the leading weakness of the band. So many of these light orchestras are praised for their rhythm, and so few deserve it. In this matter, many people take a quite wrong view; or perhaps you might say that they use language loosely. Of its kind, the playing is likely to be liked sufficiently well by those who care for their music in this form.

The Puccini opera, judging by the several songs and other extracts I have heard, gives us little we have not already heard to greater advantage in his earlier works. This selection has one or two charming tunes, that on the middle of the first side being especially pleasing. Notice, in the middle of the second side (and still more, at the end), how the composer comes back to his old methods of expression when he wants to work up emotion. The truth is that Puccini had a curiously limited range, and was sadly given to repeating himself. The volume of tone here beats a little fiercely on the diaphragm—the gramophone's and mine. The quality is good, and the body of it uncommonly so. I don't think the softer needle does the record justice, but I got a few stings with the loud one.

COLUMBIA.

L.1974, 1975 (12in., 13s.). Orchestra of Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, Paris, conducted by Philippe Gaubert: *L'Apprenti Sorcier* (Dukas), with (on last side) *Overture to Figaro* (Mozart).

The French Society of the Conservatoire, the newest recruit to recording, has a long history, for it has been in existence over a hundred and thirty years. The able conductor of this performance was born in 1879, and is a composer and flautist also. The story on which Dukas has based his delightful *Scherzo* is taken from a ballad of Goethe, *Der Zauberlehrling*, which is in turn based on a tale at least 1,800 years old. The original "apprentice" was Eucrates, who was a disciple of the magician Pancretes. The master could clap a few clothes on a pestle or a broom, and immediately it became an intelligent servant. Dukas's apprentice lad tries his master's spell (we hear it at the start), and the woodwind tells us that the charm is working—the spirits are here. The bassoon starts the job, and the swishing of the pails of water, plied by the animated broom, is cleverly suggested. The fool sprite overdoes it; the house is getting flooded, and the lad, in terror, chops the broom in two. Horror! both halves start fetching water. In despair the youth calls for his master, who appears (brass chords). One word from the wizard sends the sprites packing, with, we seem to hear, a fingers-to-nose gesture.

The playing is vivid—a little stark, I feel, but with very bright colours. Not everyone will care very much for the orchestra's basic tone, which is

a trifle strident for our British taste. It seems to me to lack full warmth and roundness; but it is interesting to hear what I suppose we may consider a typical foreign orchestra of the first class, and to compare it with our own organisations.

The Mozart is a little less smooth than the H.M.V. recording, also produced this month. The H.M.V. bass is solider, too.

VOCALION.

K.05299 (12in., 4s. 6d.). Festival Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Boult: *Overture to Der Freischütz* (Weber).

The Weber overture is a careful and consistent performance. The horns at the start are just a shade short of perfection, and their accompaniment is not ideally soft-yet-clear. The romantic feeling is there, though I personally prefer it laid on a trifle thicker, especially in the section that begins on the second side of the disc. The strings seem scarcely strong enough, in places. I think this a good bread-and-butter performance of the overture, and an averagely good piece of recording. Outside sounds (partly, here, the surface noise, which, though not very great, troubles me a little) still make me feel that the new recording can do better still in the way of giving us the music and nothing but the music.

PARLOPHONE.

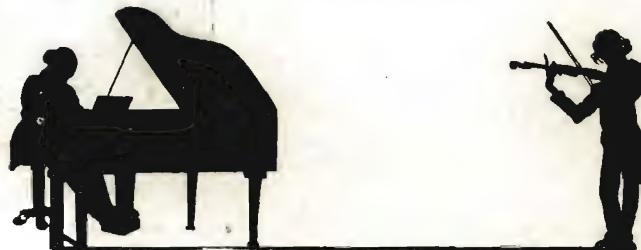
E.10566, 10567 (12in., 9s.). Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, conducted by Siegfried Wagner: *Wotan's Farewell* and the *Fire Music* from *Valkyrie* (Wagner).

E.10568 (12in., 4s. 6d.). Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Overture to Don Giovanni* (Mozart).

The Wagner has a grand impulse that carries you along finely. I just miss the full breadth and dignity of the great farewell. Siegfried does well, up to a point, and then—well, there is just the difference between his reading and a great one that there is between the best gramophone record and the real thing. The detail does not quite blend, everywhere, into the lovely whole Wagner meant it to be. Beyond a slight rawness of the brass the recording is of a high order, amply resonant and rich. There is a good drum, at the end of the second side, and the soft music on this side pleases me well. The flames flicker with the authentic magic, on the last side.

The Mozart overture, one of the few not very often recorded, is produced extremely well. With the exception of a curious non-compliance with the composer's marking (the *piano* in bars 56–59—a small point, of course), I call this a really good Mozartean performance. It is good Mozart and good Giovanni.

K. K.



INSTRUMENTAL

TWO SONATAS.

BRUNSWICK.

50062-4 (three 12in. records, 24s.).—Bronislaw Huberman and Sigfried Schulze: *Kreutzer Sonata* (Beethoven).

H.M.V.

D.1220-2 (three 12in. records, 19s. 6d.). Arthur de Greef: *Sonata in B flat minor, op. 35* (Chopin), and (on D.1222) *Grand Valse Brillante in E flat, op. 18* (Chopin).

The appearance of these *Kreutzer Sonata* records is presumably an aftermath of the Beethoven centenary. As I have not got the other records of this work handy at the moment I must avoid comparisons. But the Huberman first movement is excellent and quite complete; the sympathy between the two performers is remarkable, and by eschewing unnecessary violence they have secured the utmost clarity throughout, besides lessening the strain on our sound-boxes and ear-drums. Their slow movement is almost, though not quite, as good, and though they appear to make two "cuts," the bars omitted do not, in fact, amount to

more than "repeats"—which we can spare at a pinch. The *Finale* is a little less satisfying. I need not stress unduly the disappearance of some dozen bars in the middle, but I do feel that the *ensemble* is less perfect here and that the spirit of the music has not been so unerringly caught. The recording is good throughout, though my H.M.V. No. 4 sound-box (which may not have recovered completely from a longish holiday) was a little unhappy in the *Finale*.

Chopin wrote three Sonatas. The first is seldom if ever played; the third has been recorded by Percy Grainger for Columbia; and now we have the second, the best known of all, which has the famous *Funeral March* for its slow movement. Bearing in mind Sir Henry Hadow's comment that here Chopin comes nearer than anywhere else to achieving and sustaining the epic level, I ventured on a loud steel needle, and found, to my delight, that my sound-box made no difficulty about it. The quality of the recording is, indeed, extraordinarily high all through; a full mellow tone has been secured in all registers and there is never a trace of "blast" even in the heaviest *fortissimo*. I doubt if there is in existence anywhere a finer piece of reproduction than the *Funeral March* itself. The three records contain the whole of the Sonata without any "cuts," most of the "repeats" are observed, and even so there is a side over. De Greef occasionally allows his left hand to out-play his right (especially in the opening movement), and his *rubato* seems to break the lyrical flow of the *Trio* to the *Scherzo*, but otherwise I have no complaint to make, though the performance is not very remarkable for subtlety. The *Valse* on the odd side is given with complete technical efficiency, but I do not think that De Greef is at his best in this vein.

PIANO.

Among a small but most attractive selection of piano records I must, I think, give pride of place to **Cortot's** devastatingly brilliant *Invitation to the Waltz* (Weber) on H.M.V. D.A.855 (10in., 6s.). More effective playing or more remarkable recording than we hear on this disc I do not expect to meet for some time; the round sonority of those usually hard high notes is particularly impressive. In strong contrast to this record, but no less artistic of its kind, is **George Bertram's** very sensitive and poetic interpretation of the familiar Chopin *Ballade in A flat, op. 47*, on Parlophone E.10572 (12in., 4s. 6d.). The mellow Parlophone reproduction is peculiarly suitable to playing of this kind. The *Ballade* does not quite fill two sides and the extra space is devoted to the Chopin *Valse in D flat, cp. 64, No. 1*, which is very delicately done. Both of the above records are of outstanding excellence. *Träumes Wirren* (Schumann) is a difficult piece to bring off, and *Sapellnikoff* (Vocalion A.0270, 12in., 5s. 6d.) is to be congratulated on making it convincing, though we have inevitably to take a little on trust when the semiquavers descend to the lowest registers of the instrument. The *Staccato Etude* of Rubinstein on the back goes splendidly. I notice that the label states that this piece is "abridged"; if other companies would be equally candid about "cuts" we reviewers would be spared a lot of poring over scores. In this case the "abridgement" is of little consequence. Purcell's *Air in E minor* (on a ground bass), a *Gigue in G major*, and a *Gavotte in B flat* (these last two by Dr. Arne) provide music of a very different kind. They are played by **A. M. Henderson** on Columbia 4361 (10in., 3s.), and he deserves our thanks for adding three very attractive items to the gramophone's limited *repertoire* of old English keyboard music. The Purcell pleased me most. I am bound to add that my sound-box seemed to find this record a little difficult; but this was very likely the fault of the sound-box.

At the last moment arrives a record by **Edward Isaacs** (Regal, G.8837, 10in., 2s. 6d.), of the *Gigue* from Bach's G major French Suite and Chopin's *Waltz in C sharp minor*. The performance of the rollicking *Gigue* is clear and stimulating and the Chopin sensitive but free from exaggeration. The tone of the recording is bright but just a little hard; the Chopin would have sounded even better had a more velvet quality been obtained.

ORGAN.

The Storm (Lemmens), played by **H. Goss-Custard** (on H.M.V. C.1324, 12in., 4s. 6d.), is good as storms go. The wind and the thunder are quite realistic; only the boy behind the screen at the picture-theatre could do them better. Another record by the same player (C.1325, 12in., 4s. 6d.) contains *Evening Song* (Bairstow) and *La Nuit* (Elert). Of the two I prefer *Evening Song*, but neither is of very great interest, though they do well to show off the capacities of organ, organist, and recording experts.

VIOLIN.

An abridged and, I think, considerably edited version of the *Larghetto* from Beethoven's *Violin Concerto*, played by **Borgani** on Actuelle 15242 (12in., 3s. 6d.), did not much impress me, the tone being harsh and the interpretation lacking in refinement and poetry. Nor are things much better on the other side, the *Air* from Goldmark's *Concerto in A minor* turning out a rather dull affair. I enjoyed Borgani better in the less

ambitious, but very agreeable *Serenade* of d'Ambrosio (Actuelle 11337 10in., 2s. 6d.). On the back of this is Godard's *Angels guard thee*, played by the **Imperial Instrumental Trio** (violin, harp and organ!), but though I cannot pretend that Godard moves me deeply, yet the combination of instruments turned out better than I had anticipated. A record by **Isolde Menges** (H.M.V. D.1223, 12in., 6s. 6d.) I can heartily recommend. It contains the *Meditation* from Massenet's *Thaïs*, played with beautiful tone and a good deal of imagination, and *Hejre Kate* (Hubay), a piece which the violinist's firm yet vital rhythm makes very effective. Both numbers are most excellently recorded. **Bratza** (Columbia D.1574, 10in., 4s. 6d.) gives us some rich, warm tone from his lower strings in a Mendelssohn (arranged Kreisler) *Lied ohne Worte*, and works his hardest to persuade us that a *Nocturne* by Lill Boulanger is interesting. He does not quite succeed but he does convince us of his own musicianship and the high quality of the Columbia recording. Perhaps next time he will have a less ungrateful task.

'CELLO.

In an arrangement of Herbert Hughes' *The Sally Gardens* (Columbia L.1977, 12in., 6s. 6d.) **W. H. Squire** produces some good tone from the lower strings of his instrument; some harshness in the tenor register and up aloft is probably attributable to the reproduction. Of his other piece, *Papillon* (Fauré), I cannot speak; my pressing was clearly defective.

P. L.



OPERATIC

EVA TURNER (soprano).—*O cieli azzurri* from "Aida" (Verdi) and *Suecidio* from "La Gioconda" (Ponchielli). In Italian. Orch. acc. Columbia L.1976 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

ELISABETH SCHUMANN (soprano).—*Venite, inginocchiatevi* and *Non so più* from "Le Nozze di Figaro" (Mozart). In Italian. Orch. acc. H.M.V. D.A.844 (10in., 6s.).

ELISABETH RETHBERG (soprano).—*Dich, teure Halle* from "Tannhäuser," Act 2 (Wagner), and *Euch Lüften, die mein Klagen* from "Lohengrin" Act 2 (Wagner). In German. Orch. acc. Brunswick 15116 (10in., 5s. 6d.).

LOTTE LEHMANN (soprano).—*Auf Flügeln des Gesanges* (Mendelssohn) and *Von ewiger Liebe* (Brahms). In German. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.20013 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

In questa reggia and *Del primo pianto* from "Turandot" (Puccini). In German. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.20014 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

ROBERTO D'ALESSIO (tenor).—*Ecco ridente in cielo* from "Barber of Seville" (Rossini), and *Ay! Ay! Ay!* (Perez). In Italian. Orch. acc. Columbia D.1575 (10in., 4s. 6d.). See also under *Songs*.

AURELIANO PERTILE (tenor).—*Non piangere Lili* and *Nessun dorma* from "Turandot" (Puccini). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.O.20010 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Vesti la giubba and *No, Pagliaccio non son* from "Pagliacci" (Leoncavallo). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.20012, (12in., 6s. 6d.).

CECIL SHERWOOD (tenor).—*La Donna è mobile* and *Questa o quella* from "Rigoletto" (Verdi). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlophone 15244 (12in., 3s. 6d.).

JAN KIEPURA (tenor).—*La Donna è mobile* and *Questa o quella* from "Rigoletto" (Verdi). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.20016 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

MARIANO STABILE (baritone).—*L'Onore* and *Prima di tutto* from "Falstaff" (Verdi). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.O.20011 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

FERNANDO AUTORI (bass).—*La Calunnia* from "Barber of Seville" (Rossini) and *Abbieta zingara* from "Il Trovatore" (Verdi). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlophone R.20015 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

ALEXANDER KIPNIS (baritone).—acc. by State Opera Orchestra, Berlin.—*Wotan's Abschied* from "Die Walküre" (Wagner). In German. H.M.V. D.1225 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

Eva Turner.—One hears a good deal of this English soprano's success in Italy and remembers with equal pleasure the promise of her more modest labours at home with the B.N.O.C. or the Carl Rosa Company—

I forget which. She is now also making records of the usual more ambitious operatic solos which dozens of other sopranos have made before her, and these from *Aida* and *Giocanda* are fairly up to the average mark. I would, however, warn Signorina Turner against the prevailing Italian habit of "forcing," because it is already beginning to harden her voice and invest it with a decided tremolo; lots of power, of course, and all the usual dramatic effects, but no real beauty either of voice or style. The tone, when not forced or even pressed, is delightful.

Elisabeth Schumann.—These two airs from *Le Nozze* sound well in the Italian, albeit not perhaps quite so perfect as they would in the German text with this gifted artist as the singer. Happily, too, both are unacknowledged, and I am not at all sure that she has ever essayed the rôle of Cherubino, though *Non so più* is of course in the repertory of every Mozart soprano. So much the more interesting. The Susanna excerpt—*Go down upon your bended knees* in the English version—is particularly sweet and tuneful; also capitally recorded and a model of clearness. The orchestra in both is perhaps a trifle too much in the background.

Elisabeth Rethberg.—Oh these Elisabeths, how clever they all are! Well do they know also exactly what suits them; and I daresay they are right in imagining that their admirers in every land where the gramophone flourishes (and where does it not?) are never tired of hearing them perform upon the same old *chevaux de bataille*. These from *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* seem to be as inevitable and popular as the solar eclipse that is due this month, only far more frequent. This Elisabeth, too, is an exquisite artist, and her *mezza voce* in *Euch Lüften* is even more wonderful than her declamation. The contrast of both in *Dich, teure Halle* is unusually marked.

Lotte Lehmann.—Not even Goethe's Charlotte (whereof Lotte is the diminutive) could have spread the butter on her bread more smoothly and finely than our favourite Marschallin has spread her mellifluous tone over the surface of the *Lieder* records which I am here permitted to review. The heavenly melody of *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges* is quite divinely phrased, i.e., without the slightest seeking after effect, sustaining it with a clarity and steadiness of tone that puts something of unwanted charm into Mendelssohn's immortal song. Again, in that of Brahms perfection is attained through simplicity, fervour, sincerity, and true sense of contrast. In the *Turandot* pieces one notes great depth of sentiment, growing passion cleverly brought out, irreproachable intonation, and a noble style throughout.

Roberto d'Alessio.—The name of this new Italian tenor is identical with that of the unbelieving hero of *La Sonnambula*, but his voice does not bring back memories of bygone tenors who used to warble the inspired Bellini melodies in equally bygone days. No, d'Alessio is fashioned, like all up-to-date Carusos, upon a certain recognized pattern of which contemporary Italian teachers have unquestionably mastered the peculiarities, and which I, for one, am as unquestionably not in love with. The style is equally unmistakable in each of the singers whose records I am noticing after this. The rendering of *Ecco ridente* reveals first-rate breath-control (one of the good qualities of the school) in a pleasing voice, but by no means immaculate *fiorituri*.

Aureliano Pertile.—The La Scala favourite is to be heard at Covent Garden this month, so I will confine myself now to praising his obvious realization of Puccini's intentions in the two examples from *Turandot*. In those from *Pagliacci* the notable points are the tremendous vocal power employed, the fearless outbursts of anger, violent passion, and despair in which Canio can now indulge before the microphone, and which would formerly have resulted in hopeless "blasting." The effect of sonority is truly gigantic. If he can only keep down his tendency to a strong *vibrato* my impression is that he will prove to be the best robust tenor heard since Tamagno.

Cecil Sherwood.—The gramophonist who is not on the look-out for names only will probably find as much satisfaction in this cheap *Actuelle* disc as in that recording the same two airs from *Rigoletto* noticed in the succeeding paragraph. Both are cut to pattern. The voices are different, the individual qualities different; but the style, the phrasing, the ornaments and flourishes—these are absolutely identical. And the surprising part of it is that the foreigners appear to assimilate the familiar characteristics of timbre and method every bit as naturally and readily as the Italians themselves. Be they American, Polish, Irish, what you will, they all lay hold of the "pattern" with the same exactitude. Cecil Sherwood does this and something besides: he puts into his singing intelligence and a certain measure of individuality, and he always keeps perfectly in tune even on his loudest notes.

Jan Kiepura.—The same *Questa o quella* and *La donna è mobile*, imitated from the same model, only with a bigger tone and a few more liberties in the treatment of the design, and—at very nearly double the price. Personally I do not lay great stress on names or sensational

methods. Hence I would for once prefer the cheaper article, because on the whole it is the better one. The more expensive record certainly furnishes more resonance for the money, more variety of rhythm and cadence, and a good high B at the end. *Voilà tout!*

Mariano Stabile.—Here, again, you have remarkably good value in a remarkably fine record. Stabile's rendering of these two scenes from *Falstaff* is quite unique, and it is gratifying to find that they have been made available for the gramophone in all their perfection. The orchestration sounds thin; but, where the voice, the amazing diction, the endless varieties of colour and nuance are so completely satisfying, one does not feel the need for more. Indeed, it brings back the whole picture for those who have seen it, and faithfully suggests it for those who have not. As he trolls forth his contemptuous views of "honour" and his triumphant boasting to Ford, you can positively visualize the "fat man" strutting about the inn parlour at Windsor. Stabile is truly the ideal Falstaff.

Fernando Autori.—Creditably sung, but no more, and, of course, adequately recorded, are these familiar excerpts. *Don Basilio* in *La Calunnia* and *Ferrando* discoursing of the past to the Count's retainers, in the first scene of *Il Trovatore*, are early Rossini and Verdi of a purely characteristic type and always worth hearing.

Alexander Kipnis.—This is by a long way the finest record (two parts) of *Wotan's Abschied* that has come under my notice. Kipnis is a *basso cantante* with a glorious voice of enormous volume, yet capable of investing the long farewell with all the delicate and strongly contrasted shades of expression of which it is susceptible. But for his recent engagement at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, Kipnis would doubtless have been heard in the *Ring* cycles just concluded; but anyhow he was announced to be the Marcel in the revival of *The Huguenots*, and that would afford him a sufficient chance of proving his worth to begin with. His singing and declamation in this record must be described as magnificent, and in it he is worthily supported by the orchestra of the Berlin opera house. The recording, too, is extremely fine.

HERMAN KLEIN.



SONGS

H.M.V.

Peter Dawson (bass-baritone) in English: *Don Juan's Serenade* (Op. 38, No. 1, Tchaikovsky) with orchestra, and *The Erl King* (Schubert), accompanied by Gerald Moore. C.1327 (12in., 4s. 6d.)

Elsie Suddaby (soprano).—*Cuttin' Rushes* (from C. V. Stanford's *An Irish Idyll*) and *Where the bee sucks* (Arne). E.453 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra: *Notturno d'amore* (Love's Nocturne, Drigo) and *Serenade* (Toselli), both in Italian. D.B.1002 (12in., 8s. 6d.).

I would risk a small bet that this is the best existing record (with English words, that is to say) of *Don Juan's Serenade*, especially if it is the first electrical recording of this swaggering song, Tchaikovsky in his best mood, in which ringing vocal tone counts for a great deal, and telling orchestra for not very much less. The record is notable for this song in itself. It appears to be a re-recording, as Dawson already has it in the H.M.V. Catalogue.

As for *The Erl King*, if you wish Dawson's compared with other records, you should, if possible, hear it for yourself. Hardly any two people seem to hear this song alike. Personally I feel that Dawson is out of his element, if not his depth, or rather, perhaps, does not rise to its height. I expected to find that the trouble would be that Dawson seemed as English as ever; but I don't think it is quite that. It is rather that while he seems on the surface to delineate the three characters splendidly, he has not really succeeded in living the song. But you must judge for yourself. At any rate, you need not be loth to accept it as a companion to the *Serenade*. Gerald Moore plays the terrific piano part to somewhere near perfection.

Cuttin' Rushes is one of the most delightful songs ever written, even by Stanford—indeed, the whole of *An Irish Idyll* should be well received if recorded. *Elsie Suddaby* is finding a permanent place among our few really good singers. There is not quite enough sparkle, nor variety, in her *Cuttin' Rushes*, and she has not quite overcome her tremolo. Still, if this is not quite the ideal recording of the Stanford, it is easily good

enough to go on with. The pianist, too, is good enough ; but this is a piano part which, to be perfect, needs practising like a solo. *Where the bee sucks* is entirely pleasing, except that there is more tremolo, and that diction is not always perfect, though better than in the other song.

Gigli is magnificent—I almost said magniloquent. There is only one criticism, and that is that he is too violent, singing always at the top of his voice—at least, I hope it is the top of his voice, for the result is trying enough to one's eardrums, unless one hears it from a really safe distance—say, a few rooms away. He gets some fine broad phrasing. All this, be it said, only applies in full force to the *Notturno d'Amore*, which as music is in very nearly the same style as the Toselli. This popular *Serenade* is superbly done.

COLUMBIA.

Dame Clara Butt (contralto), with piano and organ, recorded in Christ Church, Westminster Bridge, London : Four of Dvorák's *Biblical Songs* (Op. 99). X.335-6 (two 10in., 6s. each.).

Muriel Brunskill (contralto) : *O, lovely Night* (Teschemacher and Ronald) and *Kathleen Mavourneen* (Crawford and Crouch). 9199 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Rex Palmer (baritone) : *The Rebel and Cradle Song ("Son of Mine")* from W. Wallace's *Freebooter Songs*. 4366 (10in., 3s.).

Roberto d'Alessio (tenor) with orchestra : *Ay ! Ay ! Ay !* (Italian Air) and *Ecco ridente in Cielo* (from Rossini's *Barber of Seville*). D.1575 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

It is good to find recorded, almost for the first time, some of Dvorák's many songs other than the lovely but hackneyed and illtreated *Songs my Mother taught me*. A vast number of people (among those who know composers' names at all) must know him only as the composer of that song and of a *Humoreske* ; a fair number more know that he wrote a popular *Symphony*. His *Biblical Songs* may not be quite among his greatest music—I don't know them well enough to dogmatise—but they are certainly music to know. Anyone who has any love of his music cannot be disappointed in them. And they are as individual as anything he ever wrote. One fancies one could guess their composer with ease. Of Dame Clara Butt it can hardly be necessary to say much, except that she is almost at her best. There is hardly one actual flaw. Phrasing is rather broken, and there might be more fire in her singing. The first song especially calls for this. The accompaniment is quite effective, but one misses Dvorák's keen sense of orchestral colour.

The Brunskill records can be recommended as perfect to those who collect all available records of either song or of Miss Brunskill herself.

"Uncle Rex" Palmer has a large and devoted wireless following. Such people will be glad to know that this is, as far as I know, the best record he has made. His singing of these two songs has much attraction, but I don't think, personally, they are the best recordings I know. The swinging rhythm of *The Rebel* is occasionally held up a little, though never enough to be really annoying. But one's impression is that his production is at the moment hardly equal to *Son of Mine*. Breathing is not good and tone is too veiled.

I have this month two records of *Ay ! Ay ! Ay !*. This one is splendidly done, for those who like it sung with some vehemence. There is a presumably unintended comic effect on the last note. The opera air is, I believe, reviewed by Mr. Klein elsewhere.

VOCALION.

John Thorne (baritone) with orchestra : *Four Jolly Sailormen* and *Glorious Devon* (Edward German). X.9996 (10in., 3s.).

I can't remember if this is the first time *Thorne* has issued the challenge implied by entering the three-shilling field. At any rate, he easily holds his own here. I can't imagine liking the *Four Jolly Sailormen* much better. Those who like *Glorious Devon* in itself will be equally pleased here.

PARLOPHONE.

Reginald Whitehead (bass) : *Father O'Flynn* (arr. C. V. Stanford) and *Off to Philadelphia* (Battison Haynes). E.10575 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Emilio Vendrell (tenor) with orchestra : *El Trust de los Tenorios* (Jota, by Serrano) and *Ay ! Ay ! Ay !* (Vidalita, by Perez). R.O. 20009 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Whitehead you must if possible compare with others for yourself. The only guide I can give is to say that he is perhaps the most Irish ; otherwise I don't think his *Father O'Flynn* has quite the spirit of Radford's (H.M.V.). His *Philadelphia* is good, and incidentally has at least one astonishing fat low note. The record is easily good enough for anyone who happens to want just these two songs.

Perhaps it is the combination of southern warmth and colour with lilting rhythm that makes Spanish music so alluring to English people.

El Trust is at least as good and as enticing as most popular Spanish songs. *Vendrell* seems to me to sing it almost perfectly—purely musically, that is, for I have to confess entire ignorance of Spanish ! At any rate, he most certainly conveys the sense of the music, whether it is that of the words or not. And he sings the well-known *Ay ! Ay ! Ay !* with none of the violence that I've always heard before—quietly and sensitively, in fact. The orchestra is good, though tone is not brilliant.

ACTUELLE.

Rispah Goodacre (contralto) with orchestra : *Wayfarer's Night Song* (Easthope Martin) and *Meadowsweet* (Brahe). 15243 (12in., 3s. 6d.).

Booth Hitchen (baritone) with orchestra : *Come to the Fair* (Easthope Martin) and *Invictus* (Huhn). 11345 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

BRUNSWICK.

Allen McQuhae (tenor) with orchestra : *Come to the Fair* (Taylor and Martin) and *The Sound of the Irish Bells* (Brandon and Trent). 3231 (10in., 3s.).

The *Wayfarer's Night Song* belongs to a class which must often puzzle the would-be middlebrow reviewer. It would, at any rate, be foolish to condemn utterly anyone's taste for liking it, but it is certainly not a song which any highbrow, however genuine and catholic his taste, would be anxious to listen to. It has good orchestration, and is well-recorded here. It would be interesting to deal with such music at length in the manner of Mr. Percy Scholes. But for *Meadowsweet* I can find no honest praise. *Rispah Goodacre* sings both songs really excellently, excepting just a little of the contralto's difficulty of pure vowel production. She has a good, full voice.

Here are two more records of the rollicking *Come to the Fair*. In general spirit *Hitchen's* is almost as good as any. Vocally he has been praised already in these columns—under Beltona, I think. I will not venture to say that his diction is yet perfectly clear, as I know these two songs off by heart. A tiny fault is a little breathlessness, even to holding up the swing just a wee bit here and there. His record is cheaper than most, yet has orchestral accompaniment. So, too, has *McQuhae's*, with a vengeance, but that is its only virtue, except, perhaps, that he has a voice of some power. He has either no conception of, or no regard for, rhythm, and he seems to think he should be a Cockney, turning "Heigh-ho ! " into "Hi-ho ! " *The Sound of the Irish Bells* can only be recommended to those who have an insatiable craving for tame bell imitations. *Hitchen* gets as near to Henley's *Invictus* as *Huhn* allows him—indeed, he gives me a slight doubt whether the music is really so inadequate after all.

REGAL.

Robert Layton (baritone) with orchestra : *Why shouldn't I ?* (J. Vigor and K. Russell) and *Spanish Gold* (H. Chesterman and H. Fisher). G.8840 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

Joan Murray (contralto) with orchestra : *My Treasure* (M. Barr and Joan Trevalsa) and *Ships that pass in the night* (Longfellow and T. Wilkinson Stephenson). G.8841 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

I've included *Why shouldn't I ?* because I think it's a good sound tune of the unpretentious, commonplace sort, even if following conventional lines ; is a perfectly good record to turn on when you feel the need of something of the very lightest ; and is really splendidly sung. So is *Spanish Gold*, but this song aims higher, and it is at least debatable whether it rises far above commonplace.

Personally I consider *Joan Murray's* two songs definitely pernicious, but if you must have them, here's a good opportunity of the two together, cheap, excellently done.

C. M. C.

Music and the Gramophone

Compiled by H. L. WILSON

"It will assuredly become a classic with all those who take the gramophone seriously."

Journal of Education

7s. 6d. net postage 3d.

THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1



CHORAL

H.M.V.

The Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, with string quartet, recorded in the College Chapel: *Have mercy upon me, O God* (Byrd), in 2 Parts. B.2448 (10in., 3s.).

The Choir of New College, Oxford, recorded in the College Chapel (unaccompanied): *Lord, for Thy tender mercies' sake* (attributed to Farrant) and *O Lord, my God* (Wesley). B.2446 (10in., 3s.).

PARLOPHONE.

The Irmel Choir, with orchestra: *Gloria sei Dir gesungen* (Glory now to Thee be given) (Chorale from the Cantata, *Sleepers, Wake—Wachet auf*—by J. S. Bach) and *Ave Maria* (Arcadelt). E.10565 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

VOCALION.

The Gondoliers (Gilbert and Sullivan): *No possible doubt whatever* (Act I) by John Buckley (bass), Quartet and orchestra, and *Take a pair of sparkling eyes* (Act II) by Cavan O'Connor (tenor) with orchestra. X.9995 (10in., 3s.).

COLUMBIA.

Community Singing—92,000 Voices at the Wembley Cup Final, 23 April, with the Grenadier Guards Band, and led by Thomas P. Ratcliff. *Abide with me* and *Land of my fathers*. 9201 (12in., 4s. 6d.). *All through the night*. John Brown's body and Loch Lomond. 4367 (10in., 3s.).

REGAL.

"**Daily Express**" **Community Singing** at Bournemouth—Kenneth Walters, with 4,000 Voices: *Land of hope and glory* (Elgar) and *God bless the Prince of Wales* (Brinley Richards). G.8836 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

The Cloister Choir, with organ: *The strife is o'er* (arr. from Palestrina) and *Jesus Christ is risen to-day* (tune from *Lyra Davidica*). G.8839 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

ZONOPHONE.

Orpheus Male Choir, with piano: *March of the Men of Harlech* (Welsh Air) and *Song of the Marching Men* (Protheroe). 2910 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

The *St. John's College* record is one of the finest, and perhaps the most significant, of all choral records yet issued. There are now at any rate two or three really worthy modern-process records of sixteenth-century choral music, and perhaps those who value this music as highly as any ever written are going to be able to build up slowly a moderate little library of it. The gramophone could do more than anyone or anything else for this musical sixteenth-century revival, which probably few people will ever appreciate until they have learnt a little of both mood and idiom. There are those who place William Byrd on a pedestal as high as that of his contemporary William Shakespeare, and there is at least no plain absurdity in doing so. In *Have mercy upon me, O God* he is at his sublimest. In such music there can be no choir in the country much better than, and very few indeed as good as that of St. John's. This anthem is accompanied by strings, and here these are perhaps a little too strong when combined with the voices. You should buy the music, if obtainable (probably Stainer and Bell, Novello, or Oxford University Press, at a few pence), even if you have no *practical knowledge* of musical notation. The recording is superb—equal to any yet done outside the studio; but I shall go on repeating that such recordings cannot attain the perfection of the studio until it is proved otherwise. Dr. Rootham and his Choir could give us records of such music equal to most other choral records put together.

Having written, then played the record again, I feel tempted to wipe out all criticism. This is real singing.

Of the *New College, Oxford* record, I should probably have said all that I have just said of the *St. John's* record, had not that from Cambridge appeared. As it is, the Oxford record is only a very little pale in comparison. The music is not so outstanding, though (on one side) equally good in its way. The very beautiful *Lord, for Thy tender mercies' sake* is one of the simplest anthems of the sixteenth century, and is also about the only one that needed no revival. But its recording is

almost equally important, small thing though it is. *O Lord, my God* shows up badly in such company. It is certainly not Wesley at his best. One can only say that it has some merits, and is, indeed, almost as good as anything of this sort produced by the nineteenth century; and that its performance and recording are almost perfect.

Of the glorious Bach Chorale (*Irmel Choir*) all I can say is that if anyone can hear this with complacence, then he should do something about it, for something inside must be stagnant. The brass alone is thrilling—indeed, the record is technically remarkable for it. I am not sure that the instrumentation is Bach's—the bass may be augmented, for instance—but I am quite sure that he would have beamed with joy at the effect, especially as the bass is half the glory of it. If any company thinks of trying to beat this recording of the Chorale, they should be very sure of themselves before trying. I reviewed the *Ave Maria* last month, and will only add that its sheer loveliness is a magical contrast to such a companion.

Another cheap Gilbert and Sullivan record from *Vocalion* takes a high place beside those of last month—higher, in fact, for it is almost as good as one could wish. I like *Take a pair* as well as I've ever heard it. Buckley, too, is good, except that he says there's "no shadow or mayner of doubt."

The *Wembley Cup Final Community* is surely the biggest yet? It is also one of the best of such records. There's not much to be heard of the Guards Band. Perhaps with so many Welshmen there one might have expected still more lusty singing—especially seeing what tunes they are singing. 9201 is the more orderly. 4367 contains *John Brown's Body* as well as the tunes mentioned on the labels, and is rather diverting by reason of a presumably unofficial and irrelevant but aggressive bugle.

In the *Regal Community* record Walters is highly efficient, and so, also, is the community. The reproduction is fierce, but just about successful. There is surely a trained part-singing quartet or choir in *God bless the Prince of Wales*?

The *Cloister Choir* hymns are almost as good as usual. But the pace is too heavy in both. *The strife is o'er* tune is, of course, arranged from a Magnificat of Palestrina. He never wrote it as a hymn-tune. The only actual "arranging" in the music is the addition of the "Hallelujahs."

This is a good sound record of a harmonised version of the *Men of Harlech*. The tune might be a bit clearer, also the words. *Song of the Marching Men* is a good companion, in similar style. An excellent record of its type.

C. M. C.



CHAMBER MUSIC

There is no chamber music to review this month, but as it was I who dealt with most of the Beethoven centenary records I have been asked to add a note on the two Flonzaley Quartet albums (H.M.V.) which were discussed last month by my colleague K.K. I find I agree with almost everything he says except his general conclusion. My own feeling is that the Flonzaley Op. 18, No. 2, is too rich, too orchestral for early Beethoven—except, perhaps in the *Finale*. But (while admitting K.K.'s strictures) I am deeply moved by the op. 135. To take a single point, neither the N.G.S. nor the Columbia versions succeeded in making the opening of the last movement quite convincing. Here it is supremely impressive, on account of the unique fullness of the Flonzaley chording. I have no space for further comment, but I certainly give the Flonzaley first prize for op. 135. This quartet, by the way, occupies seven sides, not eight. The eighth side in the album contains the third movement from the work in C minor, op. 18, No. 4.

P. L.

ELGAR

Pianoforte Quintet in A minor, Op. 84, played by Ethel Hobday and the Spencer Dyke String Quartet, for the

National Gramophonic Society

on five 12in. d.s. records.



BAND RECORDS

The electrical recordings played by the **Beltona Military Band** are improving steadily, and their two latest are distinctly good. The medley of *Old English Folk Dances* (1209) is very attractive and contains many of those airs that we all know so well but to which we can never give a name. *Colonel Bogey* is played very well but too fast for my taste, and *Heroes of the Flag* is a very ordinary sort of march. Once more I reiterate why cannot we have more of the older marches by Sousa? They are so much better than most of the tame milk-and-watery specimens that are jobbed on to us nowadays.

Just as it is with most of the new marches, so is it with most of the new musical comedies. By comparison many of the older ones are worthy of being classed as comic operas. *The Belle of New York* is one of this genus and the selection played by the **Grenadier Guards Band** (Col. 9192) makes a really enjoyable record. There are some really good tunes brightly played and admirably recorded. What about *Florodora* and *San Toy* next?

The **Silver Stars Band** has fallen from grace this month. This is not to say that their new records are really bad, but merely that they are not up to the high standard of the series of classical overtures and selections that they have played for the Regal Company during the last year or so. *Oberon Overture* (G.1044) is played very stodgily, and it is not until the band is more than half way through with the work that it really warms up to it. The arrangement is not one of the best, too much use being made of the saxophone. This instrument is even called upon to play the opening three-note horn call, and lamentably feeble and thin it sounds. The one superlative feature of this record is the splendid recording of the tympani. *Valse Triste* and the *Serenade* from *Les Millions d'Arlequin* (G.1043) are a little better, in spite of imperfect intonation here and there. The deep register of the solo clarinet is very beautiful.

Rubinstein and *Faithful and Bold* Marches are both above the average of their kind and the **St. Hilda Colliery Band** play them with real punch. Again, however, the intonation is faulty in places.

Late Arrivals.—The Beltona record of *Colonel Bogey* mentioned above is repeated on Aco. G.16194. In this instance it is coupled with the *Slow, Quick and Inspection Marches* of H.M. Welsh Guards played by the Regimental Band. The first of these is *Men of Harlech*, but I cannot give the names of the other two. This side of the record is more interesting than attractive. The Columbia and Vocalion Companies have each issued a brace of marches played by the bands of the **Grenadier Guards** and **Life Guards** respectively. *Bond of Friendship* and *Strauss* (Col. 4359) are both tuneful and the instrumentation of the former is very interesting. *The Uhlans' Call* and *Mercatel* (Voc. K.05300) are typical cavalry Marches with a lilting rhythm. In both cases playing and recording are excellent and if I have any preference at all it is in favour of the Vocalion record because of the larger band employed.

W. A. C.

BOOK REVIEW

MUSIC : CLASSICAL, ROMANTIC AND MODERN. By Eaglefield Hull. Dent, 10s. 6d. net.

What a title! Let it be said at once that Dr. Hull has grappled skilfully with his vast design, which is nothing less than to give an outline of music's history in, roughly, the last three centuries and a half. He says much about composers, giving an immense amount of information concerning them, sometimes with a touch of enthusiasm that is very welcome, as when he speaks of Verdi (page 157). I feel that he rates some moderns too highly—Satie, for instance. In view of the recent commotions, about certain (temporary) lions and the subsequent deadly calm, we may well ask "Whaur's yer Wullie Stravinsky noo?"—and include Scriabin and many another in the question. Apparently Dr. Hull does not set out to be critical; yet he does indulge in some criticism, only part of it apt and happy. He has to be brief of course, and that means we do not, perhaps, get the whole of his mind in a few lines; but he seems unduly hard on Metner, of whom, after giving him some praise, he says, "If pure abstraction in music, as indicated occasionally by Bach and Schönberg, ever takes a decided turn again to 'musical mathematics' and 'musical geometry,' Metner may gain a largely increased following." This is scarcely good enough for Metner, who is far finer than these words (or all those Dr. Hull writes of him) would make him out to be. Note the phrase about "Bach and Schönberg." This is an unhappy conjunction. The musician guesses what Dr. Hull has in mind, but the non-technical reader for whom he writes will probably not know. This phrase indicates that the author has a strain of rashness in him. Take this definition (page 364): "The Romantics are all for 'heart' and the Classicists all for 'head.'" Even taking it with its context, this is sadly misleading.

It is pleasant to find a section of nearly fifty pages, giving lists of illustrative records. This does not pretend to be complete. It is a pity that only three companies' records are mentioned, besides those of the N.G.S. The Beethoven symphonies were all done long ago by Parlophone, but Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 6 are not down in Dr. Hull's list as recorded. Probably the centenary output of Beethoven came too late for the book. I notice, though, that the latest volumes on Beethoven are in his book list. It is a pity the prices of the books are not given. The extra trouble is worth while. We like to know if we are to be let in for eighteen pence or eighteen shillings.

Dr. Hull seems to dislike wireless, I note. He thinks "it is quite evident that we are but on the margin of a still greater musical revelation." It isn't at all evident to me, I'm sorry to say. I wish he would show us why and how.

Page 311: "The voice, like the ear, is capable of any amount of development." Extremists seem to think the ear can stand anything. I doubt it.

There are twelve good portraits, and some music-type illustrations. Three useful appendices (besides those giving lists of records and books) contain biographical notes, definitions of musical terms, and titles of well-known musicians' favourite folk-songs.

The book is a great compendium, in which all may delve with profit. Those will get most who can best discriminate among values—both the composers' and the author's.

K. K.

ZONOPHONIC

ARISTOCRATS OF THE HALF-CROWN RECORDS

**A WIDE VARIETY OF THE HIGHEST-GRADE,
ELECTRICAL RECORDINGS**

2/6 10 inch **SEE THE JUNE LIST** **12 inch 4/-**

Electrical Records

MISCELLANEOUS

This month there are some particularly fine twelve-inch records in my pile. The *Blue Danube* and *Tales from the Vienna Woods* have probably never been recorded with more impressive resonance than by the **Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra** under **Stokowski** (H.M.V. D.1218, 4s. 6d.); and in contrast I doubt if a combination of the size of the **J. H. Squire Celeste Octet** has ever before recorded parts of the Piano Concerto and of the "1812" Overture on one side of *Memories of Tchaikovsky* (Columbia 9198, 4s. 6d.). You would hardly believe it could be more than a brave effort, but it is: the Octet has pulled it off without blinking, and the *Danse des Mirlitons* and *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt* provide the dainty other side. One of their best records.

Estudiantina and *The Skaters* are well done by the **International Concert Orchestra** (H.M.V. C.1325, 4s. 6d.) and another Waldteufel waltz, *Song of Autumn*, is coupled with the charming *Flower's Dream* by the **Edith Lorand Orchestra** (Parlo. E.10570, 4s. 6d.), which also provides on E.10569 (4s. 6d.) a first class *Cavalleria Rusticana* Fantasia. Add to these two waltzes, the popular *Mignonette* and a most attractive *Sulamith* played as beautifully as possible by the **Dajos Bela Orchestra** (Parlo. E.10571, 4s. 6d.), which has apparently been increased in size; a good recording of **De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra** in their famous *Carmen* Selection (H.M.V. C.1325, 4s. 6d.); and a *Musical Switch-Humoresque* in four parts, arranged with great ingenuity by K. J. Alford and played with faultless gusto by the **Plaza Theatre Orchestra** (Col. 9196 9197, 9s.)—undoubtedly a pair of records to possess for entertaining purposes.

All these records I recommend without reservation; nor must I forget a very welcome recording of the *Prelude* and *Call* from Norman O'Neill's incidental music to *Mary Rose*, played by the **Court Symphony Orchestra** under the composer (Col. 4360, 10in., 3s.), and a pleasant Brunswick record (3017, 3s.) of *Only a Rose* and *Someone to love*, while for those who have room for another record of Suppé's *Poet and Peasant Overture* there is a remarkable one at the price by the **National Symphony Orchestra** (Zono. A.319, 12in., 4s.). The **Dajos Bela Trio** (piano, 'cello and violin) makes its début with Tchaikovsky's *Chant d'Automne* and Schumann's *Träumerie* (Parlo. E.10573, 12in., 4s. 6d.). If this had been a 10 inch record at 2s. 6d., I should have recommended it very strongly.

Those who, like myself, have a weakness for Pipe Organ Records will be embarrassed by the wealth of four records by **Jack Courtney** on a Christie Unit organ (Col. 4371 3s., and Winner 4610, 4611, 4612, 2s. 6d. each), two by **Reginald Foort**, at the New Gallery cinema (H.M.V. B.2444, 3s. and C.1320, 12in., 4s. 6d.) and a seventh by **Edmund Cromwell**, on Imperial 1743 (2s.). The last is not improved by the nameless singer who intervenes; but if it is Mr. Cromwell himself bursting into song, I can quite understand the impulse and forgive him; for there is really something very exhilarating as well as soothing about all these shimmering melodies on the pipe organ.

There is a **Savoy Orpheans** 12in. Selection of Romberg's *Desert Song* tunes (H.M.V. C.1328, 4s. 6d.) and another of Friml's more attractive *Vagabond King* tunes (H.M.V. C.1333, 4s. 6d.), but to this I prefer the record by **Percival Mackey's Band** (Col. 9195, 4s. 6d.), chiefly because of the piano solo passages. People who remember the Elisabeth Pechy—Gladys Moncrieff dust up when the *Blue Mazurka* came to Daly's will be interested by the Pechy's record of *Life is a beautiful garden* and *Shine bright moon* (H.M.V. B.2457, 3s.), two songs from the play. She sounds to me perfectly fit for the Princess's part, and sings charmingly. But the Moncrieff in two songs from *Princess Charming* (Voc. K.05301, 12in., 4s. 6d.) proves once again her fine voice for these simple tunes. It is a question of temperament.

The batch of records of *Lady Luck* which Columbia made with a lead line from the Prince of Wales's theatre may not be technically perfect—I seemed to detect a curious buzzing now and then in the three-pianos accompaniments—but they are a startlingly satisfactory souvenir of the play. Phyllis Monkman, Madge Elliott, Cyril Ritchard, John Kirby, Laddie Cliff and Leslie Henson are all heard at their best; and even people who do not care for this type of record will, I fancy, be delighted with *Boadicea* sung by the three last-mentioned, and *Sex Appeal*, a typical Hensonism, on Col. 4341 (3s.).

One of the tunes, *Sing*, is done by Laddie Cliff on 4340 (3s.), and more effectively by the **Singing Sophomores** on 4346 (3s.) with *Take in the Sun*, *Hang out the Moon* on the reverse. This makes a good record to get, and the same quintet sing *Lay me down* and *Why do ya roll those eyes* on Col. 4272 (3s.). They are always good: and as an almost perfect example of straight quartet singing, try the **Shannon Four** in *Carry me back to old Virginny* and *The Old Oaken Bucket* on Regal 8812 (2s. 6d.).

Layton and Johnstone continue their series with three more records (Col. 4328, 4329, 4330, 3s. each); the **Radio Franks** on Brunswick 3428 (3s.), the **Radio Imps** on Imperial 1747 (2s.), **Deslys and Clark** on Aco G.16196 (2s. 6d.), **Billy Mayerl and Gwen Farrar** on Voc. X.9998 (3s.). **Florence Oldham** and **Tommy Handley**, wireless favourites, on Zono. 2912 (2s. 6d.), the **Cabaret Singers** on Regal G.8843 (2s. 6d.) and **Jim Miller and Charlie Farrell** on H.M.V. B.2456 (3s.), all make pleasant sympathetic noises in a popular blend; perhaps the best are the first and last. For a change I look forward to a record of **Mack and Moran**, who I hear have been recording in America for Columbia. They should prove even more attractive than **Sam 'n Henry**.

Now I come to the vocal soloists. **Vaughn de Leath**, the Radio Girl, is now in four catalogues: Columbia and Aco, Parlophone and Brunswick. The two last are May records, and her admirers will have already bought Parlo. R.3316 (3s.) and Brunswick 3443 (3s.). I have not heard R.3324, the June Parlophone, on which she sings *Muddy Water* and *Some of these days*. Anyhow she is one of the American importations who are enormously popular over here. Of the others, **Nick Lucas** (Brunswick 3433 and 3439, 3s. each), **Cliff Edwards** (Actuelle 11341, 3s.), **Annette Hanshaw** (Act. E.11338, 2s. 6d.), **Willard Robison** (E.11339, 2s. 6d.), **Gene Austin** and **Johnny Marvin** (H.M.V. B.2455, 3s.) need no further recommendation from me, though I should like to deal with them in detail. **Art Gillham** and **Wendell Hall** are neither seen nor heard this month, while **Jack Smith** and **Lee Morse** are both in the country at the moment of writing, clinching their popularity with the gramophone and wireless public. **Melville Gideon** (H.M.V. B.2449, 3s.) and **Albert Whelan** (Voc. X.9997, 3s.) are good enough to hold their own in any company; and of other unaffected singers of rubbish I would commend especially this month **Whispering Ed** and **Charles Keene** (Imperial 1745, 2s.) and **Fred Douglas** on Regals. The great virtue of the latter is that one hears every word without effort.

I have kept to the end the new comers. Firstly Brunswick has given us (3435, 3s.) the record of *Ain't she sweet?* and *Muddy Water* which the great **Harry Richman** puts on a Panatope in his club on Broadway when he is tired of singing himself. He stands beside it, mouthing and gesticulating like any Johnny Hudgins—and it is a great stunt, they say. Anyhow, this is the record of the month to buy. Then there is **Russell Douglas**, in the very latest American style, singing *In a little Spanish town* and *I've grown so lonesome* on Parlo. R.3317 (3s.). He is certainly extremely good, with piano and guitar accompaniments. Thirdly **Art Fowler** on Actuelle 11363 (2s. 6d.), who is now singing at the Pavilion in London. He is said to be a wizard, but there is not all his magic in this first record. The clearness of the words is beyond belief, and the skill is there, but the charm somehow eludes me. I want to hear more records of his before I put him in the highest class, when deprived of facial expression. And fourthly Columbia has produced a new and delightful star in **Dick Robertson** (and a piano) on two records (4327 and 4331, 3s. each). I strongly advise everyone to try the latter, *Ain't she sweet?* (the tune of the moment), and a very clever version of *Bridget O'Flynn*. Finally a welcome to the irresistible **Florence Oldham**, who sings English, a great relief after some of the Americans, and has a first-class accompanist, noticeable too in the duets with **Tommy Handley** mentioned above. She will give us even better records with more recording experience—I hope this isn't a *bêtise* on my part—but this one (Zono. 2915, 2s. 6d.) is a good start.

I was told the other day that no one reads my review, indeed that no one could make any sense of such a jumble, and I was asked whether I realised that some of these singers whom I dismissed with a phrase were paid as much as £300 for making a record. I wish I could mend my ways; but I can't. I could write pages and pages, which might please the record makers as much as myself; but all that I am allowed to do is to indicate which out of a hundred records I should put aside to play again to my home-circle. It would be rather a kindness if anyone would write to me, care of THE GRAMOPHONE, and say whether my tastes are the same as his (or hers) and whether I ever miss a really outstanding record: and how, in fact, I can be more useful.

PEPPERING.

Nightingales

Wireless listeners heard Miss Beatrice Harrison playing the *London-derry Air* and the *Chant Hindou* to the nightingales in her Oxted garden, and the response of the singers to her 'cello. The idyll is now embalmed in wax, and the new H.M.V. records, B 2469 and 2470 (the former including also the chorus of bird song at dawn), will supersede the wonderful old nightingale record which has for years provided Mr. H. C. Rink and others with one of the outstandingly beautiful stunts of which the gramophone is capable.

NEW-POOR RECORDS

Machine used, Peridulce cabinet; sound-box, Peridulce; needles Euphonics.

BELTONA.—Easily first among these is a DANCE number quite unique for its beauty and vigorous recording of the drums—*Indian Butterfly* (2s. 6d.). It is a fine composition too, and all the instrumental work is good and brilliant. **SCOTTISH RECORDS.** An organ record of a couple of psalm tunes, showing good bass tone, *Coleshill* (3s.). Song, *The Auldest Aberdonian* (2s. 6d.). Song, *Leezie Lindsay* (2s. 6d.), sung by Mrs. Henderson, who is quite delightful in her distinctly northern style. **MILITARY BAND.** An interesting set of unjoined *Old English Folk Dances* (2s. 6d.). **POPULAR SONG,** *Learn to Smile* (2s. 6d.), sung by John Roberts.

H.M.V.—The first electrical recording of Marek Weber's **SMALL ORCHESTRA** should be acquired by all lovers of this conductor's work, notwithstanding the fact that the subject chosen for recording is a Strauss waltz showing less inspiration than some, *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (3s.).

HOMOCHORD.—Exceedingly welcome are the really good **STRING BAND** recordings *Pizzicato "Sylvia"* (2s. 6d.) and *Shepherd Fennel Dance* (4s.). The really perfect **SMALL MILITARY BAND** records have added to them *Crown of India March* (2s. 6d.). There is another of the series of delicate **ORGAN SOLOS**, *Le Cygne* (4s.).

IMPERIAL.—**CELESTE ORGAN AND VOICE.** *Blue Skies* (2s.). **WALTZ,** *My Sweetheart* (2s.). Both are pretty numbers and wonderful value at the price.

PARLOPHONE.—Very many congratulations indeed to this company on the entire change in this month's style of electrical recording. The records have suddenly become my most brilliant examples of the new system. I am entirely delighted with them and I do hope that if a few people possessed of bad machines grouch (that such brilliant tone does not suit their particular reproducing combination) their grumbling may go unheeded. There is not a trace of blast on them anywhere and with correct reproducing apparatus they will last for ever. A **PIANOFORTE** record comparable with the wonderful Percy Grainger Chopin Sonata as a show piece is *Soirée de Vienne* (4s. 6d.). The most superb concert record of **VIOLIN AND PIANO** yet produced is *Sonata XI*, Paganini, played by Tospy Spivakowsky (4s. 6d.). The violin is as full of tone as the real thing and the instrument seems to be a foot in front of the gramophone. **FULL ORCHESTRA.** *Rheingold* (Entry of the Gods) (4s. 6d.), a grand record that will take its place as the best of this subject. Ronnie Munro's **JAZZ** band plays *Learn to Smile* (2s. 6d.). Two Waldteufel **WALTZES.** *I love you* (4s. 6d.), wonderfully "forward."

WINNER.—I should put the **GRAND ORGAN** record first of these. *Le Cygne* (2s. 6d.). Bobby Gray, with his lovely voice and irresistible style, has become my favourite singer of **POPULAR SONGS.** *Swinging along* (2s. 6d.). **SAXOPHONE**, a good solo, *Saxophobia* (2s. 6d.). **SACRED**, another of the series of grand ensemble records, *Sun of my Soul* (2s. 6d.).

V.F.—ORCHESTRAL. On two ten-inch discs at 2s. 6d. each, *Gipsy Suite*, played by the Royal Symphony Orchestra, is a new-poor number indeed. In the first electrical recording (a good one) I have of *Air on the G String* (2s. 6d.) Zacharewitch is entirely satisfying. Pini is just as good on the 'cello, *Londonderry Air* (2s. 6d.). In the 12 in. discs at 4s. each Edith Furmedge proves that the imperfections of some of her former records were not due either to the voice or the singing method, *The Carol of Three Birds*. Gwladys Naish, **SOPRANO**, is quite at her best to date in a couple of operatic selections, *Queen of the Night* (*Magic Flute*).

ZONOPHONE.—Every purchaser of amusing speaking records should get *The Disorderly Room* (2s. 6d.).

ULTIMATE SELECTION.—**ORCHESTRAL:** (12 in.) *Rheingold*. **PARLO.** (10 in.) *Gipsy Suite* (V.F.). **SOPRANO:** ****Queen of the Night* (V.F.). **VIOLIN AND PIANO:** (12 in.) ****Sonata* (Paganini). **PARLO:** (10 in.) *Air on the G String* (V.F.). **'CELLO:** *Londonderry Air* (V.F.). **PIANOFORTE:** ****Soirée de Vienne*. **PARLO:** **SMALL MILITARY BAND**: *Crown of India*. **HOMO:** **STRING BAND:** *Pizzicato, Sylvia*. **HOMO:** **WALTZES:** ****I love you*. **PARLO:** **FOX TROT:** ****Indian Butterfly* (BELTONA).

H. T. B.

GRAMOPHONE TIPS by Captain
H. T. Barnett, M.I.E.E. 1s. post free.



DANCE NOTES

By J. W. G.

In the ensuing comments, thick type denotes a fine performance on both sides, two stars and one star signify descending order of merit, whereas no star at all indicates an only fairly good record. Distinctly inferior ones are omitted.

ACO (2s. 6d.).

A sad, sad collection of records this month! I always find Aco records well up to the fore, but, apart from two records, both Harry Bidgood and the **Lyricals** have failed me this month. Let us hope for much better things next month.

G.16199.—***The Riff Song* (Desert Song) (Harry Bidgood's Orchestra). This is well played. *One Alone* (Desert Song) (Club Maurice Orchestra). A poor tune at the best.

G.16203.—***Ain't she sweet* and *Oriental Moonlight* (Harry Bidgood's Orchestra). The former is excellent and is well played.

G.16204.—*How I love you (I'm telling the Birds)* and *Sam the old Accordion Man* (Lyricals). Two good tunes finely played, the former in a rather slower time than most versions of it.

ACTUELLE (2s. 6d.).

On the whole a disappointing lot of records with a few bright spots, notably 11330.

E.11324.—***Since I found you* and *High, high, high up in the Hills* (Lew Gold and his Orchestra). I don't like the latter tune—I don't like the way it's played.

E.11325.—**Only a Rose* (Vagabond King) (Tuxedo Dance Band) rather monotonously played and ***Song of the Vagabonds* (Lew Gold and his Orchestra). This is good except for the rather unpleasant trumpet tone.

E.11326.—***Take in the Sun* and **Calling* (Willard Robison's Orchestra). The former is as good as I've heard of this tune. The latter is a pretty "chune" in good smooth time.

E.11327.—*Hello! Bluebird* (Willard Robison's Orchestra). I think we're getting a little tired of this once excellent tune, still, a good record. *I'm telling the Birds* (Willie Creager and his Orchestra).

E.11328.—**Blue Skies* and **The Riff Song* (The Desert Song) (Willie Creager and his Orchestra). These are well played but not good tunes.

E.11329.—*Darby Hicks* and *Piano Tuner's Dream* (Deep River Orchestra). Two uncommon Charlestons.

E.11330.—*Falling in love with you* (Waltz) (Selvin's Dance Orchestra). *In a little Spanish Town* (waltz) (Phil Napoleon Orchestra).

E.11335.—***In our love canoe* (waltz) and **Just a rose on old Killarney* (Utopia Waltz Orchestra). The playing is good in both.

BRUNSWICK (3s.).

Not a very exciting lot this month. As far as I know, the Anglo-Persians are new-comers, and how they play! It is wonderful what they make out of two very poor tunes, and I look forward to hearing them play something good.

3406.—**Hot Mustard** and **Clarinet Marmalade** (one-step) (Fletcher Henderson and his Orchestra). Very reminiscent of Ted Lewis' playing.

3425.—**Sam the old Accordion Man** and **Here or there** (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra). The latter is a very old-fashioned tune.

3438.—**The Sphinx* and **Delilah* (Anglo-Persians). The playing is very good—not so the tunes.

3444.—**Ain't she sweet* and ***I'm looking over a four-leaf clover* (Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra). There are many better versions of the former tune and the latter is not quite so good as the Vocalion version.

3452.—***Yankee Rose* (march one-step) (Harry Archer and his Orchestra). This is even better than the H.M.V. version—very "Yankee." ***High, high, high up in the Hills* (Harry Archer and his Orchestra). An unfortunate choice for the back of *Yankee Rose*, but it is very well played indeed.

3455.—**Never without you* and **Ev'ry little while* (Ben Selvin's Orchestra). Good playing.

COLUMBIA (3s.).

Considering the number of much-recorded tunes contained in it, this batch of records comes out with flying colours, but it would be so nice to see a few more new names. I think Cook and his Dreamland Orchestra are making their débüt for this Company and has scored a big success in "High Fever." The Piccadilly Revels Band continues to excel itself.

4325.—***Song of the Vagabonds* and ***Only a Rose* (Vagabond King) (Piccadilly Revels Band).

4326.—***Ain't she sweet* and *High, high, high up in the Hills* (Piccadilly Revels Band).

4332.—*Where do you work-a, John?* (6-8 one-step) and **Crazy words, Crazy tune** (Piccadilly Revels Band). The success of the one-step depends entirely on the novelty of its playing—this is a huge success.

4334.—*Dear child* (waltz) and **Brainstorm** (Debroy Somers Band). The waltz is very well played and avoids monotony. "Brainstorm" is in slow Charleston rhythm.

4336.—*I hate you* and **World of Love* (Blue Mazurka) (Jay Whidden and his New Midnight Follies Band). I wish we could have some of Franz Lehár's tunes recorded.

4338.—*High Fever* (Cook and his Dreamland Orchestra) and **Since I found you** (Ipana Troubadours). A smooth fox-trot.

4339.—*Meadow Lark* and *Flapperette* (Piccadilly Revels Band).

4344.—***If I were you* and ***Sing* (Lady Luck) (Percival Mackay's Band). Not so good as H.M.V.

4345.—*Blue Pipes of Pan* (one-step) and **Syncopated City** (Lady Luck) (Percival Mackay's Band). Much better playing than the previous record.

4368.—*It made you happy when you made me cry* and ***I'm looking over a four-leaf Clover* (Paul Specht and his Orchestra). The latter has a wonderful banjo solo.

4369.—*There ain't no maybe* (Paul Ash and his Orchestra) and **I love the College Girls** (Californian Ramblers).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE (3s.).

The Gramophone Company give us an excellent set of records this month. I must give the "plum" to the record by the Rio Grande Tango Band of two 6-8 Paso-dobles. I have heard no band that records yet which can produce such perfect effects in these 6-8 dances simply by the careful study of accentuation.

B.5244.—***Pretty little thing* (Charleston) and *Moonbeam, kiss her for me* (Savoy Orpheans).

B.5245.—*Sing* (Lady Luck) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra), delicious slow Charleston, and **If I were you** (Lady Luck) (Hylton's Hyltonians).

B.5246.—*Blue Train Song* (Blue Train) and ***Cock-a-doodle* (Hylton's Hyltonians). The former is a very poor tune. The latter a Charleston.

B.5248.—***Cheritza* (waltz) and *Oriental Moonlight* (Savoy Orpheans). The waltz is delightful.

B.5249.—**Memphis Shake** (Dixieland Jig Blowers). An excellent "hot" slow fox-trot. **So will I** (Goodrich Silvertown Cord Orchestra).

B.5250.—**Temperamental Baby** and **Cover me up with Sunshine** (Hylton's Hyltonians). Excellent playing.

B.5251.—*Paree* (6-8 Paso-doble) and *Brazillia* (6-8 Paso-doble) (Rio Grande Tango Band). I have commented on these above.

B.5254.—*Yankee Rose* (march one-step) and *Reading between the Lines* (Savoy Orpheans). The former is a Yankee march played with fine swing.

B.5257.—***You can't cry over my shoulder* and *Two lips on a path of Roses* (Hylton's Hyltonians). The former has a Black Bottom rhythm.

IMPERIAL (2s.).

Imperial send us two excellent waltzes this month which everyone should possess.

1740.—**In a little Spanish Town** (waltz) and **My Sweetheart** (waltz) (Adrian Schubert's Concert Orchestra).

1742.—***Ain't she sweet* and **Looking at the world through rose-coloured glasses* (Jack Peters and his Band).

PARLOPHONE (2s. 6d.).

E.5767.—***Why do ya roll those eyes?* (Princess Charming) and **Learn to smile** (Princess Charming) (Ronnie Munroe and his Orchestra). The former played with quite good rhythm.

E.5769.—**Crazy words, crazy tune** and **There ain't no maybe** (New York Syncopators). "Crazy words" has a Black Bottom rhythm.

E.5774.—**Take in the Sun** (Arkansas Travellers). Played more as a Charleston than most others of this. **Cock-a-doodle** (Tom Stacks and his Minute Men). Very quick Charleston.

E.5775.—**Sam the old Accordion Man** and **My little Bunch of Happiness** (Bar Harbor Society Orchestra).

E.5776.—***That's a good girl* and **Pretty lips* (Harry Reser's Jazz Pilots). The former's a slow fox-trot, the latter a Charleston.

E.5777.—***I need lovin'* and ***I've got the girl* (Goofus Five).

R.3323.—**Clarinet Marmalade** (one-step) and **Singin' the Blues** (blues). (Frankie Trumbauer's Orchestra). 3s.

E.5784.—**Here or There* and ***If I didn't know your Husband* (Bar Harbor Society Orchestra).

E.5786.—**I've grown so lonesome* and *When I'm in your arms* (Happy Hour Orchestra).

E.5787.—**Ain't she sweet* (Ted Wallace and his Orchestra) and *Wistful and Blue* (Mike Markel's Orchestra).

E.5791.—***Dreamy Devon* (waltz) and *Napoli* (waltz) (Frank Westerfield's Orchestra).

E.5800.—**Mamma's gone young* and ***Yiddisha Charleston* (Will Hurst's Band).

REGAL (2s. 6d.).

I'm a little disappointed in the records of Jack Payne's Band after last month's issues. The Raymond Band play G.8848 well.

G.8844.—***Yiddisha Charleston* and *When the love-bird leaves the nest* (Jack Payne's Hotel Cecil Band). The Yiddisha Charleston grows on one.

G.8846.—*Safe in your arms* and **Since I found you* (Jack Payne's Hotel Cecil Band). The former is very dull—the latter very quick.

G.8844.—*Forgive me* and ***Sing a song of sixpence* (Tony Lowry's Band). A good tune after the style of High-diddle-diddle.

G.8848.—***Oh! Marie* and ***Hello! Swanee, hello!* (Raymond Dance Band).

VOCALION (3s.).

I have not listed the records by Billy Mayerl's Band, since these are dance notes, and I defy anyone to get any pleasure out of dancing to his piano solos in them, so ragged is the time. Of the others, I like Teddy Brown's playing far more than I did last month, but I think the honours go to the Riverside Dance Band.

X.10002.—***The Desert Song* (waltz) and **One alone* (Desert Song) (Teddy Brown's Café de Paris Band).

X.10003.—**Oriental Moonlight** and **Sweet Thing** (Teddy Brown and his Café de Paris Band). This is by a long way the best I've heard of the former. Teddy Brown's Xylophone astonishes me more and more.

X.10004.—**Angel Eyes* and ***I'm looking over a four-leaf clover* (Riverside Dance Band). The playing of this band is excellent.

WINNER (2s. 6d.).

4615.—**Everything's Peaches** and **Meadow Lark** (Regent Dance Orchestra). Both good smooth fox-trots.

4616.—***Song of the Vagabonds* and **Only a Rose* (Vagabond King) (Alfredo's Band). Excellent playing.

ZONOPHONE (2s. 6d.).

2917.—***Ting-a-ling* and **You can't take away my dreams* (Devonshire Restaurant Band).

2920.—**Sadie Green** and **Coney Island Washboard** (one-step) (Five Harmoniacs).

2921.—**I love the Moonlight* and **Desert Song* (waltz) (Bert Firman's Dance Orchestra).

2923.—**Only a rose* and ***Song of the Vagabonds* (Vagabond King) (Bert Firman's Dance Orchestra).

CORNUCOPIAE

A Study in Gramophone Theory

By P. WILSON

I.—INTRODUCTION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY.

AT the moment we are passing through a stage in the history of the gramophone which is full of significance. Until recently our knowledge of the art of sound reproduction has been largely empirical. A multitude of experiments have been made and many useful facts gleaned thereby. But the experimenting has been, as it were, a mere groping in the dark, and the conclusions have been incomplete and uncertain. Now, however, we are arriving at the scientific stage, and the change is as promising as that from alchemy to chemistry. Many difficult problems remain, but the means of tackling them are well within reach.

The advance has been made possible by the research work of a number of American telephone engineers. Their investigations in pure acoustics, electrical transmission theory and in radio are proving to be of far-reaching importance. The account of them is scattered amongst a number of American technical journals, and until recently appears to have attracted but little attention over here. I myself was first introduced to it last December by Mr. R. P. G. Denman, who called my attention to a paper by S. T. Williams, of the Victor Company, in the *Journal of the Franklin Institute* for October, 1926, and to a paper on Loud Speakers by C. R. Hanna and J. Slepian, read before the American Institute of Electrical Engineers in February, 1924.

At the time I had myself done a certain amount of theoretical and practical work, following a method suggested by Arts. 265-6 of Rayleigh's *Sound*. The theory was based on assumptions which are only approximately true, but I found it possible to make some allowance for the factors which I was unable to calculate. Thus, for example, I found that the logarithmic or exponential horn about which I wrote last year was only a first approximation to the ideal shape. I knew some of the mathematical properties of that ideal shape, and could show that the logarithmic horn gave a close approximation *provided that it was long*—which, again, other considerations dictated that it must be. In this particular respect the American articles did not get me any further; they stopped at this first approximation even as I had had to do. In other respects, however, I found them very illuminating. The comprehensive nature of the new gramophone theory is one of the most striking things I have come across for many years. It is only the mechanical application of the theory that is apt to be troublesome and complicated.

This series of articles was planned some months ago

as an exposition of the properties of horns. But it is so important just now to have clear ideas of the fundamental principles that I have decided to extend its scope and to give a general survey of the theory of sound reproduction. Much of the mathematical analysis is far too involved to be presented here, so I shall have to confine myself to a description of the results by means of formulae, tables and curves, and to a discussion of the assumptions upon which they are based and of the limitations to which they are subject. I regard this latter feature as of the utmost importance. It is not by any means uncommon in industry for theoretical formulae to be applied in circumstances which are implicitly excluded by the assumptions upon which the formulae are based; it is then that we hear that theory and practice do not agree. On the other hand, a consideration of the limits of application of a formula very often gives us a good deal of information about the behaviour just outside the limits, and thereby indicates the most fruitful field for practical experiment.

For those who wish to pursue the matter further I give below a list of references which I have come across. Numbers 2, 3 and 6 I have not yet been able to look up.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

1. LORD RAYLEIGH: "Theory of Sound": especially Arts. 255-266, 280-1, 291, 300-313. (Macmillan.)
2. Prof. A. G. WEBSTER: *Proc. Nat. Acad. of Sciences*: 1919, pp. 275-282.
3. Prof. G. W. STEWART: *Physical Review*: 1920, pp. 313, 326.
4. H. FLETCHER: *Journal, Franklin Institute*: June 1922, and Sept., 1923. *Physical Review*, Sept., 1923. *Journal, A.I.E.E.*, March, 1926.
5. C. R. HANNA & J. SLEPIAN: *Journal & Trans. A.I.E.E.*: 1924.
6. A. N. GOLDSMITH & J. MINTON: *Proc. I.R.E.*: Aug., 1924.
7. C. W. RICE & E. W. KELLOGG: *Journal, A.I.E.E.*: Sept., 1925.
8. J. P. MAXFIELD & H. C. HARRISON: *Journal, A.I.E.E.*: March, 1926.
9. S. T. WILLIAMS: *Journal, Franklin Institute*: Oct., 1926.
10. H. J. ROUND: *Modern Wireless*: Oct., 1926.
11. British Patents, Numbers 213,528; 245,415.
12. Prof. D. C. MILLER: "The Science of Musical Sounds." (Macmillan.)
13. K. S. JOHNSON: "Transmission Circuits for Telephonic Communication." (Library Press.)
14. N. W. McLACHLAN: "Wireless Loud Speakers." (Iliffe & Sons).

P. WILSON.

Postscript.—Since writing the above I have come across a book, just published, which incorporates a good deal of the matter of the other references. Like No. 13, it was written by a member of the technical staff of the Bell Telephone Laboratories (which was the birthplace of electrical recording), and is very stiff reading, even to a mathematician.

15. I. B. CRANDALL: "Vibrating Systems and Sound." (Macmillan.)

THE GRAMOPHONE IN SCHOOL

A NEW FEATURE *conducted by* W. R. ANDERSON

THIS month I have pleasure in giving the third of the articles written by musical educationists who have had great experience in using the gramophone in school. The Rev. J. B. McElligott, O.S.B., B.A., Director of Music at Ampleforth College, was one of the earliest, most enthusiastic and discriminating of gramophiles. His suggestions as to the place and purpose of the instrument, and as to its peculiar advantages, might well be used as points of persuasion when dealing with school governors and parents of the stiffer sort, not yet won over to keen and practical support of the well-equipped teacher who wants to make intelligent use of this, as of all other boons of science.

Father McElligott writes as follows:—

It would have been interesting if Matthew Arnold had devoted one of his Essays in Criticism to the gramophone. That finely-balanced mind would have stood the test, no doubt. But it is a test. There is something about the gramophone which sways the judgment from its habitual poise. Either one appraises it with the gusto of Mr. Agate or scowls at it with Inge-like disparagement. It is difficult to be detached about it; difficult especially, perhaps, for those of us whose work lies in schools, and who have had experience of the opportunities which it gives for musical enjoyment. I say "musical enjoyment" rather than "musical education" or "the development of musical taste" because it seems clear that in a Public School musical enjoyment leads directly to musical understanding; that, in fact, a boy does not come to understand music *except* by enjoying it. This is a platitude, but there are those who think that only after giving a boy a course in aural training, a chart of sonata form and some illustrations of the cor anglais and the bassoon is it safe to let him hear a good deal of music. This seems more than doubtful. An interest in music, obtained from listening to it, will probably create an interest in all these things, but not *vice versa*.

There is one criticism of the gramophone which may be discussed in this connection. It is a weighty criticism, and expressed by some well qualified to judge. It is that the gramophone distorts tone, that the voice never quite sounds like a human voice, that the orchestra is always a potted orchestra, no matter how well reproduced, that a violin often sounds like a flute or clarinet. One could multiply instances. I have heard it urged against the gramophone that a promising voice was ruined because its owner tried to imitate the tone-production of some of Caruso's records. These critics say, with justice, that there

is a widespread inability to distinguish good tone from bad; singers, for instance, are applauded for quite other reasons than the production of good musical tone, and it is maintained that the gramophone is helping on this unsatisfactory state of affairs by accustoming the ears of thousands to distorted tone values. It is usual to bemoan the low standard of criticism in English concert audiences. Even the "Promenade" audience will applaud the ballads in the second part of the programme with the same enthusiasm as a real piece of music in the first part. One extraordinary instance of this occurred last year when a singer was encored after he had sung a ballad so much out of tune that the accompanist had to stop playing. Recently Mr. Ernest Newman has even suggested that when English orchestras play listlessly and with poor tone it is really the fault of the audience, who don't know the difference.

To the critics aforesaid this seems a serious state of affairs; they say that the musical standard of the nation depends chiefly on a habit of accurate listening, on a discriminating knowledge of what is pure tone. If this is so is it not seriously detrimental to the national taste to use gramophones in our schools instead of teaching boys what pure tone really is? This is a strong line of attack, and must be met if we are to justify our faith in the gramophone as an educational instrument.

It may be suggested in answer that boys are not in much danger of taking their standard of pure tone from the gramophone. Everybody knows that the reproduction of music is not yet perfect, and it is safe to say that anybody who likes good music on the gramophone allows for this. Boys certainly do. They are extremely critical of gramophone reproduction, and if one of them were to say to a master who had sung at a school concert, "Your voice sounded fine, Sir—just like a gramophone," there would be little doubt of the effect he intended to convey.

And in any case, we may argue, when does a boy at school hear perfectly pure tone? When does anybody hear it? If we scan the music page of *The Times* or the *Sunday Times* for the concert notices of the week we shall be left with the impression that it is something that the critic is always hoping to hear and never does. And this in London, where presumably the best artists are obtainable. But if the leisureed and affluent music lover can only occasionally hear perfect tone, how is a schoolboy to hear it? He won't hear it from the school oboist. He will probably not even hear it from the piano master on the school Bechstein (supposing that there is one—a large sup-

position). One might even say that the schoolboy's whole musical education consists in producing and listening to imperfect tone. It is the same with plays. Is a schoolboy never to act Shakespeare because he can't speak blank verse perfectly? And is he never to see Shakespeare acted until all the finest artists on the stage come down to the school to do it for him?

Naturally the aim is to do all these things as well as possible. Boys are capable of working extremely hard to produce good artistic results. The point is that the result of their imperfect efforts in performing or listening is not to make them complacent with an imperfect standard, but to raise their idea of what perfection is. In the case of the gramophone, the better the reproduction is the more are they able to imagine what perfect reproduction might be.

But, apart from this, the gramophone has important functions to perform in schools. I will take what seem to be the more important of these.

First, then, the gramophone is the only means of putting boys in direct contact with many musical works which otherwise they would not hear. The enjoyment of music which leads to a sound understanding of it falls into two parts: there is the music itself, the message, what the composer wishes to say; and there is the presentation of it, the playing or singing. This second part, the presentation, itself divides into two: the style and accuracy of the playing or singing, and the quality of tone. Quality of tone, let us admit, is difficult to judge by gramophone reproduction alone. It is, however, not at all impossible to learn a good deal about tone from the gramophone: a study of the recent records of Elisabeth Schumann and Elena Gerhardt (H.M.V.), or a comparison of the Flonzaley (H.M.V.) and Lener (Col.) Quartets in the same work, for example Beethoven's Quartet in G, Op. 18, No. 2, would furnish some instructive lessons in tone quality and production. An understanding of musical style can be excellently conveyed by the gramophone; something will be said of this later.

But the main function of music, the contact between the mind of the composer, as expressed in the musical work, and the mind and heart of the listener, is the chief use of the gramophone in school, and in the case of many works the gramophone is the only means of realizing this. There are simply no facilities in most schools for boys to hear the larger orchestral works, beyond an occasional local concert. But on the gramophone he can hear all the Beethoven Symphonies, several Mozart, the Elgar Enigma Variations, the last three Tchaikovsky Symphonies, Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique, Scheherezade, L'Après-midi d'un faune, Concertos by Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky and others, and a considerable amount of Wagner. These works are, of course, only a selection of what is available in the

new recording. The Chamber Music list is also a very large one, and grows month by month. Now the gramophone does enable boys to take in the meaning of these works (in various degrees, of course), and the "message" of the composer can come through the records even if it is difficult at times to tell whether a clarinet or viola is playing the tune. I have found this to be true in many instances; and, if we are to have a choice, it seems arguable that a boy who is gropingly aware of what the composer is trying to tell him has got more out of music than one who can spot a disguised version of the second subject or is able to remark that one of the horns was a bit woolly at his second entry.

It is sometimes urged that it is better to play an orchestral work on two pianos or on an organ than on the gramophone, because in the first case the boys are hearing the tone of a real instrument, whereas on the gramophone they do not get verisimilitude. I do not think this is so. The colour and polyphony of the instruments is a necessary part of any orchestral work, and you get neither of these on the piano. Instrumental colour is especially necessary in modern works, and boys instinctively enjoy it. To take one instance: there is an old recording by Columbia of the "Nocturne" movement of Vaughan Williams's "A London Symphony." It is, as a production, defective in various ways, but in spite of this you get from the violins and horn at its close a striking sense of what the composer wishes to convey—the unquiet brooding of night over deserted streets and dark houses. I heard the same piece played by a noted musician on an organ, and the picture, with its sense of the sinister and mysterious, was gone. I do not mean to disparage the piano or the organ. By all means let them be used to the utmost of their capabilities. The contention here is that the gramophone has a special usefulness in bringing a great variety of orchestral and chamber music works, well played by fine artists and by players and conductor on their mettle, before boys who would otherwise hear very little of such music.

There is little space left to speak of the use of the gramophone in teaching a sense of musical style. The gramophone here has the same advantage as the slow-motion camera has in reproducing the strokes of Hobbs or Lenglen on the screen. You can take point after point in a well-sung song and isolate and repeat the phrase, knowing that it will be exactly the same at each repetition. As the usefulness of the gramophone to the student of singing has not perhaps even yet received due recognition, I might illustrate the point from a vocal record, an old and faulty one. The old Columbia record of Gervase Elwes singing Graham Peel's "In Summer-time on Bredon" is not a good reproduction, and it is not a great song, but Gervase Elwes was a great singer, and in a simple song like this he can provide an object lesson that any boy can understand. Boys often have entirely

the wrong notion about style; they think it consists of flourishes. A lucid, taut English sentence, like many of Belloc's, seems to them undistinguished and less stylish than the elaborate ramifications of Ruskin, or Pater, or Sir Thomas Browne. But it is not difficult to convince them that if Hobbs flourished his bat about he would not have time to hit a fast ball with the middle of it. They learn, in fact, the profound truth that style consists in the absence of flourishes. Now play through the song on the gramophone. They see (when it is pointed out) that the song comes at you as a whole. The time is quite straightforward and strict in every verse, with a slight give and take which makes for rhythmic life. Two of the verses, "But when the snows at Christmas" and "They tolled the one bell only" are sung a very little more slowly than the rest, but the rhythm of the slower pace is as strictly kept as that of the faster. The last verse resumes the pace of the first. There is no playing about with the time, no rallentandos for effect, no hanging on to important words—and yet the poem is a poignant one which offers temptations to the maker of points. Now you play the song again, and point out that all the poignancy, all the dramatic effect is there, but it is all felt and expressed *inside* the rhythmic pattern of each verse and without distorting it. For instance, the voice of the bells calling "Good people, come and pray" is done by an increase of tone and a darker colour, but without slowing the time; and at the succeeding line "But here my love would stay" the voice changes colour, lightens, and is clearly that of the lover in happy reminiscence.

Again, the tragedy of the girl's death is perfectly realized, not by any heavy dramatic effect but by a softer quality of tone and an intensified pronunciation of "stole" in "my love rose up so early, and *stole* out unbeknown," all without disturbing the rhythm. It may then be shown how the climax at the end, "Oh! noisy bells, be dumb," is achieved without

any effort, simply because the rest of the song has been so restrained. Another point which may be illustrated is the "cleanliness" of the singing, an important quality of style. The arpeggio passages, of which the voice part mainly consists, are sung without slur or scoop. No sounds are audible between the notes, and yet the notes are joined to each other by the invisible threads which mark the pure style of legato singing. This is particularly seen in the phrases "Here of a Sunday morning" and "and hear the larks so high." Finally the record can be played once more to show the boys how the controlled breathing and phrasing give the song its impetus and meaning. Other artists whose records could be used in this way with good results are Elisabeth Schumann (H.M.V.; her Polydor records do not do her full justice), Gerhardt (H.M.V. and Vocalion, but with reservations), Frederick Ranalow and Sylvia Nelis in *The Beggar's Opera* (H.M.V.), Claire Dux (Polydor and Brunswick), Roland Hayes (Vocalion, far too few), Schlusnus (Polydor, and very beautiful singing), Hans Duhan (Odeon), and perhaps best of all, Richard Tauber (Odeon), until lately the principal Mozart tenor of the Vienna Opera, and a very fine *lieder* singer. I have five of his records, giving songs by Strauss, Schubert, Grieg, and others. These are, or were, obtainable in Vienna, but I am not sure if the current Odeon catalogue in this country contains them. One double-sided record of five songs from the *Dichterliebe* could some time ago be obtained from Odeon, and he sings them superbly. It is time that some German, French and modern English songs were recorded by that fine baritone Franklyn Kelsey.

J. B. McELLIGOTT.

NOTE.—By arrangement, and for the better dissemination of these articles amongst school authorities, they are appearing also in the first issue of each month of *Education*, the official organ of the Association of Education Committees.

BACH
BEETHOVEN
BRAHMS
CORELLI
DEBUSSY
DELIUS



ELGAR
GOOSSENS
MOZART
PURCELL
SCHUBERT
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Write for Illustrated List

58, FRITH STREET, LONDON, W.1.

to the Secretary, N.G.S.

CREDE EXPERTO

By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

SOUND-BOXES FOR ELECTRIC RECORDING—continued.

Stylus Mountings.

DURING the past two years there has been a decided reversion from the highly tensioned stylus-bar to a free pivot mounting. H.M.V. No. 4 seems to have started the fashion; some eighteen months ago we criticised it on that score, remarking that in our view a form of light spring tensioning was better. The development of electric recording, however, shook our faith considerably. There is little doubt that the No. 4 was, and is, one of the best sound-boxes for electric recording that has yet appeared in this country.

During the past year we have devoted a good deal of time to an investigation, both theoretical and practical, into the effect of stylus-bar tensioning. In the old days we had ascertained that the springing in the later Exhibition and No. 2 type boxes was too fierce for best results. Our standard sound-boxes were more flexible, but we found that definition and articulation were apt to suffer on old recordings unless there was a fairly powerful tension on the stylus-bar. The effect of this tension seems to have been to improve the response in the treble at points where the actual recording was falling off.

For the greater range of electric recording the conditions are clearly different, and in the first instance we experimented extensively with various forms of free mountings. With these the breadth of tone was considerably enhanced and there was much less of that nasal, siren-like quality which had previously been so distressing. But there were two troubles which bothered us exceedingly. The first was a certain coarseness of tone, particularly in the strings; and the second was a curious buzz or chatter of the needle in the groove on heavy passages, particularly in the bass and at places of sudden increases of volume. With steel needles record wear at these points was substantial and fibres refused to stand up for long.

We therefore proceeded, little by little, to introduce spring tensioning again. To our great delight we found that a very mild tension gave us that cleanliness and instrumental fidelity for which we sought without apparently affecting the breadth of tone. And when the sound-box was adjusted for best results in this respect, the needle buzz and heavy record wear also disappeared. Our experiments, then, leave us with no doubt that the spring-controlled stylus-bar is superior to the free mounting. The control, however, must be very flexible and must be capable of fine adjustment. Later on we describe methods which we have found to be satisfactory.

The theoretical explanation of these results eluded

us for some time, though it was really staring us in the face. It is simply that the sound-box has weight. A certain pressure is necessary to keep the needle in contact with the record. The groove moves the needle-point from side to side (lateral displacement), but it also tries to lift it in a fore and aft direction; the greater the lateral displacement the more the needle tends to be lifted, and therefore the greater pressure needed to keep it in firm contact. A heavy recording thus requires a greater pressure on the record than a light one. For most electric recordings a weight of 5 ozs. is none too much.

But the application of this pressure has an effect on the motion of the stylus-bar which cannot safely be ignored. So long as the needle-point is directly under the pivots or knife-edges through which the pressure is applied all is well. But as soon as the groove carries the point to one side an overbalancing moment is set up, tending to increase the lateral displacement. Thus, if A O B (Fig. 7) represents the stylus-bar, O being the pivot, the downward pressure applied through O tends to move the needle-point A further over in the direction in which the groove is carrying it.

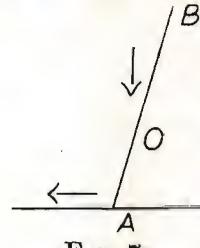


FIG. 7.

It is clear that the greater the lateral displacement the greater will be the overbalancing moment, which, in fact, is equal to the weight multiplied by the displacement. The effect will thus be felt most on heavy notes, particularly heavy bass notes, and if the notes are short and sharp only a short portion of the groove will be concerned in standing the strain. There will also be an effect on the diaphragm, but that is more involved and space prevents us from tracing it out.

To correct this overbalancing moment we require a spring tension, equal for motion in either direction and proportionate to the needle displacement and to the weight on the record. In electrical language, the overbalancing moment has the effect of a *negative series compliance* and a positive series compliance of equal amount is required to correct it. Hence the rule that the stronger the tension the greater the weight on the record and *vice versa*.

We have dealt with this feature of design rather fully because it seems to have escaped attention

hitherto. In Maxfield and Harrison's A.I.E.E. paper of March, 1926, the design of recorders and reproducers is determined by consideration of equivalent electrical circuits. In view of the thoroughness of that analysis it is curious that this one feature should have been overlooked, particularly as a similar feature due to the magnetic field in the armature of the recorder is detected and compensated. The argument may apply equally well to the pressure of the recording stylus on the wax master, and it is possible that this is one of the causes of the ripping of the wax at large amplitudes, which, we gather, has been one of the recording difficulties.

The Gilbert "Bugle" Tone-Arm (30/-)

The sample tone-arm which has been submitted to us for test is a beautifully finished piece of work. It is made in good quality brass and is chrome-plated, which renders it practically untarnishable. The workmanship throughout is of the very best quality, the motions being unusually free.

There are two respects in which we could have wished for improvement. The bore at the sound-box end is about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch. We have no doubt whatever that the smaller bore of $\frac{3}{8}$ inch- $\frac{1}{2}$ inch has come to stay. It has advantages in regard to sound-box damping which cannot be gainsaid. The other matter concerns the diameter of the hole in the base into which the tone-arm proper fits. This is considerably larger than that of the tone-arm at that point, and will cause a sudden expansion of sound which invariably means a reflection of energy and a reduction in efficiency. Possibly the makers supply a special base for reducing the diameter; there seems to be some provision for it, though it was not sent to us. In any case the user can always achieve the same purpose by using a ring of, say, Perco cement or plastic wood.

This tone-arm can be recommended for use on all gramophones in which the amplifier has an aperture of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. For old style machines with the fat, tapered goose-neck tone-arms it will be a great boon, permitting the sound conduit to be lengthened with a minimum of trouble. The effective (acoustic) length of the tone-arm is over 20 inches.

For the work involved the price (30/-) is very reasonable.

The Poltone Sound-box (12/6)

This sound-box, which Messrs. Pollards, of Blackpool, have sent us for test, has a mica diaphragm 50 mm. in diameter. The shell is well finished in lacquered brass and is in one piece so that the diaphragm has to be inserted from the front. The stylus-bar and mounting are of the type made familiar by the Apollo and Seymour A—i.e., the stylus-bar is held on to the knife-edges by stiff cross-springs separated from the stylus plate by soft rubber.

We found that this box gave excellent reproduction

of electric records, especially with fibre needles. The volume is full, the detail good, the range of tone unusually large and the "body" very impressive. Moreover, other Poltone boxes which members of the Committee recommended to their friends turned out to be well up to standard.

In view of this the price of the sound-box is extremely moderate. We can strongly recommend it to all our readers. It should be borne in mind, however, that the box is intended for electric recording. For old recording it is not so successful.

Note on Fibre Clogging, by P. Wilson

I gave a recipe for a record cleaner in my article for July, 1926. I find that a slight modification is better. My present formula is 2 parts white vinegar, 1 part 3-in-1 oil. The mixture is shaken to an emulsion and rubbed into the grooves with a clean piece of silk until no liquid apparently remains on the surface. Leave the record for about ten minutes and then play through with a fibre, repointing several times during the playing. Be careful how you place the fibre in the groove; "gently does it." Never try to put it on the record in the middle of a loud passage; you will shatter the point at once. Repoint the needle at each loud passage and start playing again from a place just before the loud passage starts.

Before you get all the debris out of the groove you may have to play through six or even twelve times. But the results amply repay the patience which is required, the reproduction being altogether cleaner and sweeter. If the record groove is dirty there is very often a sort of "beat" effect, particularly on massed strings. Some copies of the *Prelude to Tristan* have that quality even when new, and I can only conclude that during one batch of pressings the stamper got dirty.

After applying the cleaner it is important not to rub the surface of the record again with a cloth, brush or pad until the record has become clean and dry again. If you do you will rub some of the dirt back into the groove and will have to go through the cleaning process again! Cleaning by actual playing lets the needle cut an actual track for itself through the clogging matter.

With patience this process is a certain cure for fibre clogging of all kinds. It also enables a record which has been played a fair amount with steel needles to be "broken in" for fibres, though even more patience is required for this. If you want to use fibres it is a bad mistake ever to let a steel needle touch the record. Perhaps some people would have more success with fibres if their instinct was not to see first of all what a steel needle would do and only to use a fibre as an afterthought, and even then only once or twice. If you want the best results with fibres you must play five or six times before trying to pass judgment.



THE GARDE RÉPUBLICAINE BAND

By W. A. CHISLETT

THE Gendarmerie of Paris was established in 1802 and performed its necessary and useful duties under the successive names of Garde Royale and Garde Municipale, but without interruption until it was suppressed by the Provisional Government in 1848. The Garde de Paris was re-formed a few months after its suppression, and the new establishment included twelve trumpeters under the direction of Trumpet Major Paulus, who composed a special fanfare on the occasion of the great Presentation of Colours in May, 1852. The fanfare was received with great enthusiasm and is still played.

From this nucleus a band was formed and made such rapid progress that it was sent to America to take its place as the representative French band at the great Festival held in Boston in 1872. In 1873, M. Sellenick, the composer of the well-known *Marche Indienne*, was appointed Director of Music of the Corps, which by this time was officially known by its present title of La Garde Républicaine. It is curious that the band has never recorded this march. It does not appear in any English catalogue, though, of course, it may appear in that of the French H.M.V. Company.

M. Sellenick was succeeded by M. Wettge, and by this time the band had become so famous and was the source of such pride to the French nation that a special committee was set up to fill the vacancy on M. Wettge's retirement and empowered to select his successor. After making the most searching tests, M. Gabriel Pares, the Director of a Naval Band at Toulon (or, to give him his full title, "Chef de la Musique des Equipages de la Flotte à Toulon"), was appointed. The choice could not have been happier, for M. Pares is a brilliant conductor and the composer of many fine marches and of other good light music. He not only upheld, but added to, the great reputation acquired in the past, and spread its renown by tours in England, Spain, Belgium, Italy and other European countries. M. Pares retired in 1911, but that he is still active is shown by a record (No. 3845) issued last year by the Columbia Company. As *The Grenadier March*, which occupies one side of this disc, was composed by M. Pares, he was invited to conduct his old band on this occasion. M. Guillaume Balay, the then conductor of the band of the 72nd Infantry Regiment, was appointed to succeed M. Pares, and once more the choice was fortunate. M. Balay, a

distinguished musician, seized the opportunities offered by improvements in the manufacture of instruments and modern resources generally to further increase the efficiency of the band, with the result that on his retirement, during the present year, he was able to hand over to his successor one of the finest military bands in the world.

The present Director of Music is M. Pierre Dupont, who was born in 1888. Prior to his new appointment, M. Dupont was Conductor of the Band of the 170th Infantry Regiment, with which band he succeeded in winning the first prize at the International Military Band Contest at Havre in 1926. The new Director of Music is a sound musician with a wide experience, and there is every reason to believe that he will be able to maintain the high standard set by his predecessors.

The Garde Républicaine includes thirty-one Provincial Legions and Colonial and Mobile sections, and numbers at present about forty thousand men. It is recruited from the regular army, and vacancies are much sought after as, in addition to higher rates of pay, the members have many privileges. The composition of the band is rather different from that usually adopted in English military bands. A light type of bugle is much used which decreases the weight of tone, but this is to some extent counterbalanced by the free use of the family of saxophones. I cannot imagine that this difference of tone will make the successful recording of the band any more difficult, but for some reason the records available in England (I cannot speak of those made by the French H.M.V. Company as I have not heard them) are on the whole disappointing. Those issued by the Pathé Company—both Actuelle and Pathé—are rather pungent and hard, while those made by the other Companies lack body and are not sufficiently clear in detail. Taken as a whole the best of all are those issued by the Edison Company on the Blue Amberol Cylinders. Played with a diamond and on a machine with a large amplifier, these are all good, and *Marche Hongroise* (27040), *The Marriage of Figaro Overture* (27071), *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* (27081) and *Scènes Pittoresque—Fête Bohème* (27106) particularly so.

The most interesting records issued by the Columbia Company are those of Saint Saëns' *Henry VIII Ballet Music* (833 and 834), and appropriately they are also the most successfully recorded, with the possible exception of the two marches to which I have referred previously. The first movement of this suite is in the form of variations on an old English song, and to hear such music orchestrated by a Frenchman and played by a French band is bound to be interesting. This record also makes an excellent subject for a guessing competition; the percentage of people who, after hearing it, will tell you that it is from Holst's *Folk Song Suite* is surprising.

The Pathé and Actuelle Catalogues contain by far

the longest list of records, and there are many interesting titles in these lists. Many, of course, appear in both, and there is, as a rule, little to choose between them when this occurs. The Pathé records usually have rather more surface noise, particularly with a brass-mounted sapphire, but with an ivory-mounted stylus their tone is sometimes rather sweeter than that of the needle-cut discs. As Pathé and Actuelle records are so similar in tone and both so different from all other recordings of the same band, it seems certain that the rather excessive acidity in all the records made by this Company is due to the process of recording adopted. One of the most interesting items in the Pathé list is Weber's *Clarinet Concertino* (5027), which is quite successful. Lacome's *La Feria* (5456) is also good, the castanets and piccolo being particularly well recorded. Saint-Saëns's *Dejanire Prelude* (5465), Charpentier's *Impressions of Italy* (5463-5464), Chabrier's *L'Etoile Overture* (15235) and Bizet's *Bohemian Scenes* (5026), with none of which I am familiar, proved to be little better than good restaurant music. The three former are quite well recorded, the bass notes of the clarinet in the Serenade from Charpentier's Suite being exceptionally well caught, but the latter is really bad. Most of the marches are recorded adequately, but Sousa's *High School Cadets* (5020), which happens to be rather a favourite of mine, is disappointing. Of the music also available on other makes of records, Messager's *Les Deux Pigeons* (Pathé 5162, 5175 and 5176; Actuelle 15131, 15155 and 15159) is good, as also is the first *Peer Gynt Suite* (Pathé 5260, 5261; Actuelle 15196, 15197). The last movement of the latter is interesting by way of contrast with the interpretation usually given by English military bands. It is usually played with pronounced crescendo and accelerando finishing *ff*. In this version there is no quickening of speed and very little increase in the weight of tone between the beginning and the end. This is not unattractive after one gets used to it, but it sounds far more like a dance of elephants than a dance of imps. In neither of these Suites is there anything to choose between the needle and phono cut methods of recording.

As has been said earlier, none of the records of this band really do justice to it, and it is to be hoped that, in the near future, they will be allowed to take advantage of the new process of recording so that those who cannot hear the band in the flesh will by this means be enabled to compare it with English bands of the same class, such as some of our Guards Bands.

W. A. CHISLETT.

NOTE.—The Zonophone Company have also issued a number of records by the Garde Républicaine Band, but they are no longer available, having been omitted from the 1926 and 1927 Catalogues.

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

The Index

The advisable delay of proof-reading will make it necessary to postpone publication of the index to Vol. IV. for a week: and the fifty readers who have ordered copies are begged to be patient. Fifty! It hardly seems credible. The Index, which costs one shilling, will contain about 30 pages of closely printed matter. The compiling of it has been a long and harassing work, the printing of it very expensive. Yet only fifty out of our thousands of readers have sufficient energy or confidence to order it.

Binding the Fourth Volume

As usual, there are problems to be faced in binding the last volume. If advertisements and covers are kept it will be very heavy. If the covers are kept but the advertisements, and where necessary the pages of Translations, are jettisoned, the twelve issues can be kept in one of the red spring-back binding cases, or can be bound in a black cloth case like the previous volumes, with the portraits of Beethoven and Wagner and the Index. We can supply either a fat or a slender binding case with the Index for 4s. 6d.; or if you send your back numbers, with definite instructions as to the omission of advertisements, to the London Office, we will return a new bound volume for 11s., post free.

The Forum Awards

The voting for the three best out of sixteen contributions to *The Forum* showed the high level attained and the diversity of readers' tastes. All but four were placed first in some of the voting cards. The First Prize of Five Pounds is won by Mr. Llewellyn C. Lloyd for "Folk Songs of the Sea"; the Second Prize of Three Pounds by Dr. Eric H. Thiman for "Neglected Works and other Matters"; the Third Prize of Two Pounds is divided between Mr. Philip Edge for "Caruso and McCormack" and "Scrutator" for "Methods of Storing Records," who scored equal votes. The voter's prize, One Pound's Worth of Records, goes to Mr. Walter H. Scrivener, 22, Parfrey Street, London, W.6, by a short head.

The F.C.S.D.A.

We need not apologise for drawing attention to the Fay Compton Studio of Dramatic Art, which is being started with offices at 99, Jermyn Street, London, S.W.1, by our Editor's three sisters. The programme is so comprehensive that it will attract a much wider circle of students than merely those who wish to become professionals, and the time has surely come when acting for the films should be seriously and thoroughly taught. In this department Miss Fay Compton's experience will be invaluable to her pupils.

Cinema Organs

However wearisome the reiterated rubbish of cinema organ records may be to some of us, there is now a good opportunity for deciding on the merits of the British product as compared with the American. It is claimed that in the Christie Unit Organ—recorded by Jack Courtney on one Columbia and three Winner records this month—the British firm has definitely beaten the Americans at their own game, as exemplified in the Wurlitzer type of organ at the New Gallery, Tivoli, and other picture houses; and if this is so it seems a great pity that large numbers of American pipe organs should still be ordered by the cinema proprietors in this country. Perhaps one of our organ experts will let us have a considered opinion on the merits of the Christie product?

By the way, one of our readers, Mr. A. C. Delacour de Brisay, of Bedford School, has contributed an important article, "Impressions of the New Organ Records," to *The Organ* for April. This should be read by all those who contributed to our Organ Records Competition.

Parlophone Records

It is a peculiarly happy development that Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb have opened a gramophone department at 34, Percy Street (within five minutes' walk of our London Office), where all the Parlophone records are kept in stock. There are so many people who feel the appeal of the well-arranged Wagnerian and classical section of the Parlophone catalogue and who will appreciate the stores of printed music and miniature scores at 34, Percy Street as well as the musical atmosphere—a rare quality in gramophone salesmanship—that this new centre for our readers adds to—not merely duplicates—the amenities within easy reach of 58, Frith Street.

The Wilson Horn

Perhaps the letter from an enthusiastic correspondent about the Wilson Panharmonic horn would have come more appropriately under Trade Winds and Idle Puffs than in the Correspondence columns. But it is a genuine document, of public interest to our readers; and if any of them decide to try the experiment they will indirectly be helping the Research Fund for our Expert Committee. Mr. E. M. Gian is, as far as we know, the only maker who is using the Wilson horn for one of his standard models which works out at 15 guineas.

The Balmain

Similarly Mr. Balmain has at last arranged for his design to be carried out. Messrs. Murdoch, who have a model for demonstration in the N.G.S. room at 461, Oxford Street, have agreed to sell the Balmain at the following prices: Open Horn, 63 inches long on dark oak table stand, complete with sound box, unspillable mercury boxes and high-class motor, £25; Cabinet model, dark oak £50, mahogany £60, totally enclosed and containing rack accommodation for 250 records. The work is in the hands of Mr. Henry Seymour, which is a sufficient guarantee of quality, and each machine will be personally tested and signed by Mr. Balmain.

The Village Anthem

The Vicar of Washington, that lovely Sussex village whose beer was celebrated by Hilaire Belloc in *Four Just Men*, must have been surprised by the wide publicity given to his proposal in the parish magazine to use gramophone records in his church, in the place provided for the anthem in the Prayer Book. Why not indeed?

The Trout Quintet

It is not so long since a B.B.C. announcer pronounced Trout as if it were a French word; and now the *Sunday Pictorial*, giving the wireless programme, goes one better: "9.20, Schubert, played by the Trout Quintet, from the Rudolf Steiner Hall."

The Classic Waltz

"M.W.B." writing from Jersey, pays homage to the Parlophone Co. for issuing Waldteufel Waltzes—*Myosotis* (E.10513), *Goldregen* (E.10547), *Je t'aime* and *Mon Rêve* (E.10560)—and thus helping to bring "another Waltz King into his own again." He mentions too a Winner record of *España* and *Etincelles*, and the Columbia record of *Ever or Never*, played by the Jacques Jacobs Ensemble, noting that the Introduction to the last is omitted from this excellent record. "Waldteufel's Introductions are to the musician a delight; the harmonic treatment and delicious little bits of instrumentation are a pure joy." M.W.B. remembers the composer conducting his music at the Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden Theatre in the 'eighties, and sends a cutting from the *Daily Mail* which estimates that Waldteufel "must have written considerably more than two thousand waltz tunes, all in the strict 16-bar pattern."

There are some Polydor records of these waltzes and H.M.V. give us two more this month, while the Edith Lorand Orchestra (Parlo.) adds the *Song of Autumn* to the list.

The Gramophone in Politics

It is the Socialists who seem to use the gramophone most effectively. In the Styrian Diet they learned to obstruct parliamentary business "with the cacophony produced by several gramophones playing different tunes simultaneously," the *Times* reported. In our own House of Commons this practical use has not yet been adopted; but Mr. Snowden said that the Trades Union Bill was a veritable needle for the Communist gramophone, and Mr. Jack Jones denounced the Chancellor of the Exchequer as being an "Edison Bell Record." Why Edison Bell? Because Mr. Churchill is a Winner? Surely it would have been more galling to have called him a H.M.V. record.

A Correction

Messrs. Duck, Son and Pinker, from their Bristol branch, write to point out a misprint in the List of Selected Records in the May issue. Madame Kirkby Lunn's record D.B.735 costs 8s. 6d., not 7s. 6d. as stated.

Acknowledgments

Mr. N. M. Cameron, whose article on Gilbert and Sullivan records is in this month's issue, wishes to pay public tribute to the help which he received. "In the case of H.M.V. and Columbia records," he writes, "I simply had to murmur gently in Imhof's what I was doing, and there was no further difficulty about them. For Vocalions, I saw the Musical Director himself, so that was all right. Then, having seen Messrs. Cramer's advertisement about their large stocks, I made a special expedition to Brixton and took advantage of the said stocks and also of their staff's time and patience."

A Lieder Recital

Mr. Harold Burros, whose article on Geraldine Farrar appears elsewhere in this number, is giving a recital of Wagner, Brahms and Strauss songs on June 11th in the St. Hilda's Hall, Shirland Road, Paddington, at 7.30 p.m. Admission is by programme (1s.), which may be obtained from Mr. Burros, 35, Moreton Place, S.W.1.

Purcell Fantasias

The splendid edition of Purcell's *Fantasias for Strings*, which has just been issued by Messrs. Curwen, under the editorship of Peter Warlock and André Mangeot, was heralded by a performance of these important and, except to members of the N.G.S., almost unknown works by the International String Quartet at Tufton Street, on May 10th. Needless to say, the occasion was one of undiluted enjoyment, and the comments of the musical critics amply confirmed the emphasis which we have always laid on the N.G.S. records of Purcell Fantasias.

Lectures with the Gramophone

Mr. Harry Burgess, whose gramophone lectures, given in a darkened hall with lime-light lantern illustrations, are well known, writing to qualify the remarks of "Discobolos" in our last issue, mentions incidentally that once, before the war, he heard a lecture by Mr. Edwin Evans at the Aldwych Theatre with gramophone illustrations to introduce the Beecham season of Russian Opera. "Mr. Evans appeared to be afraid of the instrument, for he left the stage as each illustration was announced, returning to continue his discourse as soon as the record had been changed."

In view of our original suggestion which roused "Discobolos," we can only hope that Mr. Evans nowadays has no more aversion from the gramophone than from the player-piano. Presumably this is so, since he is rumoured to be contributing reviews of gramophone records to the new House magazine published by the Oxford University Press.

News from France

A Biarritz correspondent reports the publication of Dukas' *La Péri* by the French H.M.V., played in four parts by the "Orchestre Symphonique du Gramophone," conducted by Piero Coppola. He adds, "You may be interested in an experience I met with to-night while playing the H.M.V. record of Heifetz in *Introduction et Tarantelle*. It was the first time I had played this record with a Wilson horn which I had had sent out from England recently: and what was my surprise on starting the record to find that the violinist plays the opening bars on double strings! I had played it scores of times before on my old mahogany horn with 24-in. bell with a Virtz sound box and Lifebelt, but until I played it with the Wilson horn I had never suspected this double-stopping. I think this constitutes a remarkable testimonial to the efficacy of the Wilson horn."

Royal Visit to Hayes

Readers should ask their dealers for the May number of *The Voice*, in which a full description is given of the visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen to the H.M.V. factory at Hayes. The visit was in a way a compliment to the whole gramophone trade; and anyone who has had the privilege of seeing the process of manufacture of H.M.V. gramophones and records will understand why it fascinated the Royal Visitors from start to finish.

Among the novelties, by the way, is the mobile recording equipment on a motor chassis which has already proved its value in making records in Liverpool Cathedral, the Temple Church (though gramophones are forbidden in the Temple), New College Chapel, St. John's Chapel, Cambridge, Miss Beatrice Harrison's Nightingale Valley, and so on. The combination of enterprise and thoroughness which characterises the Gramophone Company in all its doings is endless, and one is not

surprised to be told that Chaliapine is travelling 2,000 miles in order to take part in the musical programme arranged by the Company for the Convention at Folkestone this month.

Unwanted Records

Mrs. Stanley Baldwin has already raised over £100,000 towards the building and equipment of a large Central Club for London's business women and girls under the auspices of the Blue Triangle Movement. By an ingenious scheme she now appeals for unwanted gramophone records to swell the fund. Arrangements have been made for the free collection in London of parcels of records, and the manufacturing companies are generously co-operating by buying them back on handsome terms. It is hoped soon to arrange similar collecting centres in the provinces.

This seems an excellent way of solving the record storage problem in a practicable and altruistic way. Will readers in the London district who are willing to help send us the address from which records may be collected, and we will forward the information to Downing Street?

Cabinet Work

Attention may fitly be drawn to the fact that Messrs. Imhof are having their own cases made for Panatropes. Very beautiful they are to look at, models of cabinet work; and there is no risk of cracks or warping, since a test of subjecting one to a steady temperature of 170 degrees for more than twenty-four hours is said to have been perfectly successful. The appearance of the victim after cooling was unchanged.

Beethoven and Beecham

Mr. Basil Maine writes: "The last of the London Symphony Orchestra concerts for this season was a memorable experience. Sir Thomas Beecham was the conductor, and, as we expected, he gave interpretations that were entirely fresh, and full of life and light. His faith in certain composers and works is dynamic, and when he is allowed to give expression to that faith, our ears are suddenly unstopped. He takes a work which has been made stale and unprofitable by tradition and breathes into it a new force and a new song. The secret of his power is found in the sensitiveness of his phrasing, for the phrase is the seed from which the blade, the ear, and finally the full corn of beauty spring. Nothing could illustrate this better than the performance of Beethoven's Second Symphony, which he gave on this occasion. It is possible for every reader of this journal to realise the effect of this work under Beecham's urge, for he has recorded an almost identical performance for Columbia (L.1864 to L.1867). I am glad that this conception of the work has been given permanent form, if only for the reason that it will serve to counteract the slur which was cast upon the Second Symphony in one of the Centenary books."

The Brahms Symphony (No. 3 in F major), with which the London Symphony Orchestra concert began, never fails to raise the problem of sonority. The writing is so imaginative and lavish that the slightest adjustment of perspective will completely change the ultimate effect. It seems to me that Beecham was almost too alert—too careful over detail; the result was that at various times and for long stretches the colours refused to mix. The process was too analytical to produce a definite *sensation*. The third movement was an exception, which can be partly explained by the fact that Brahms has calculated with greater precision here.

A Rhapsody for Viola and Orchestra by W. H. Reed (the leader of the London Symphony Orchestra) was given a first performance on this occasion, with Lionel Tertis as soloist. It is a neatly scored and congenial work, and makes a welcome addition to the meagre repertoire of the viola player. Tertis, who was still recovering from a recent illness, played the solo part with dignified eloquence."

Statistics

American conditions of home life may not be the same as English, but the result of a census of nearly two million homes in forty-eight States makes rather surprising reading. Apparently it is in the biggest cities that the gramophone flourishes, not in the small isolated township. Take the figures for the two extremes. Where there are a thousand families or fewer, 54.3 per cent. have telephones, 60.5 per cent. have motor-cars, 36.9 per cent. have pianos, 18.7 per cent. have wireless sets and 29 per cent. have gramophones. Contrast this with cities of 100,000 families and over: 57.7 per cent. have telephones, 54 per cent. have motor-cars, 43.6 per cent. have pianos, 26.1 per cent. have wireless sets, and 60.3 per cent. have gramophones. What would a census of English homes show? Probably the gramophone would lead, closely followed by wireless, and the piano would be a bad third with telephones and motor-cars in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE

(2) *Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.*

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

"THE NEW LIFEBELT."

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I note in the current issue (April) that the Expert Committee do not agree that a narrower band as issued with the first "Lifebelts" is better than the broad one supplied with the new model. The result of my experiments with the new model was this, that on my machines I got what I regard as almost perfect results with a New Lifebelt with a 1-in. band and a strong pair of clips attached. If, however, the new "belt" is used without the clips the extra stability afforded by the wider band is an advantage in that way, but those enthusiasts who want to get the very best out of their "Lifebelts" will find that by exchanging the band on their new "belt" for the one on their old one, and properly adjusting the spring clips (which are essential with the narrow band), that they certainly get the irresistible and fascinating "Lifebelt" tone, coupled with complete absence of torsion which caused the older "belt" to "splutter" and quickly wear the new electric records.

(Revd.) L. D. GRIFFITH.

Silvington Rectory,
Nr. Kidderminster.

THE WILSON HORN.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—As I believe, one of the first of the general public to use the Wilson Panharmonic Horn machine, I feel I should like publicly to thank Mr. Wilson and the Expert Committee for the production of this superb instrument.

I had rather lost the flavour of my gramophone, as I was getting such superior results from wireless (programmes permitting!), but the idea of the Wilson horn attracted me and I decided to try one. I realised that the assembly demanded great care and so I entrusted the work to E.M.G. Gramophones, who turned out a splendid job, really strong motor cabinet, 12-in. tone arm and specially tuned sound-box (this latter seems to be very important).

What strikes me particularly is the absence of so-called "horn" effect, i.e., the sound does not appear to come from the horn as such, and also the splendid bass, without a trace of "boom" or "hoot." It is unquestionably "the" machine for any but the multi-millionaire who may be able to purchase in the future an all-electric machine to beat it, or the man who prefers the "look of the thing" to the "sound of the thing."

Again thanking Mr. Wilson for the boon he has conferred on us, and wishing THE GRAMOPHONE all the success it so justly deserves, as a really reliable journal,

I have the honour to be,
Yours faithfully,
L. H. KINGSLEY.

Anerley.

NEEDLE SOCKETS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am glad to see the remarks of your Expert Committee "deplored the modern tendency of cutting the needle socket of every sound-box so that it can be used for either steel or fibre needles." The Committee have by no means overstated their case. To the "steelites" these fibre-cut sockets are a curse. Apart from the surface-noise, which, for one reason or another, they undoubtedly cause, they have the great drawback of making it difficult to fix fine needles firmly without breaking them. The gramophonists who habitually use both fibre and steel must be relatively few, and it seems curious that the "steelites"—who are surely in a majority—are not catered for by some of the leading manufacturers. I hope the Committee's remarks will persuade the H.M.V. Co. to go back to their old custom of providing some sound-boxes with the sockets cut for steel needles only.

Rathnew,
Co. Wicklow.

Yours sincerely,
R. H. S. TRUELL.

TURANDOT.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—If I may be allowed to make use of your pages once more on the subject of Puccini's *Turandot*, I should like to clear up a little muddle caused, doubtless unintentionally, by the Columbia Co.'s advertisement of their new *Turandot* records. One is given the impression that their recording artists were the creators of the leading rôles at the Scala last year; with the exception of Maria Zamboni's *Liu* this is not strictly speaking correct. The actual Scala cast at the opera's production was: Rosa Raisa (*Turandot*), Michele Fleta (*The Prince*), Maria Zamboni (*Liu*), and Giacomo Rimini (*Ping*). The Roman production, three weeks later, was where the Merli crowd came into prominence; here these parts were played by Bianca Scacciati, Francesco Merli, Rosina Torri, and Taurine Parvis.

The records are splendid: Merli is heard to far greater advantage on the gramophone than in the opera house, and Bianca Scacciati loses very little through the mechanical medium. Personally I prefer Torri to Zamboni, but both are good.

Yours faithfully,

A. M. GORDON BROWN.

Edinburgh.

THE POSITION OF GRAMOPHONE TECHNICALITIES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—While it is a little difficult to grasp the significance of Mr. J. F. Porte's "open letter" in your January issue, it is comparatively easy (and certainly very necessary) to shed a little light on the subject—or, rather, to dispel the fog.

One gathers that improved methods have so raised the quality of gramophone music as to render it acceptable to "a type of cultured and critical music-lover who, with every just argument in his favour, has hitherto stood aloof from the gramophone."

As a consequence of this, the literature of the subject must be reconsidered with a view to curbing the activities of the pseudo-scientists and mathematicians who are said almost to have monopolised it.

Surely it must be evident to every thinking person that "gramophone technicalities" fall into two main groups, one purely scientific and the other artistic. The first covers all acoustical, mechanical and electrical matters, while the second embraces all things pertaining to music and the drama. There are other minor groups, of course (e.g. utilitarian), but these do not affect the issue.

Now these two main groups are not compatible. Their respective adherents are different types having different interests and even differing in mentality. Only rarely does one find a person interested in both aspects of the gramophone, and hardly ever is a person qualified to speak on both with authority.

For whom then does Mr. Porte speak? It is clear that it cannot be the scientifically inclined patron who is intrigued by the gramophone as a device. Nor can it be for the new recruit, for of him it is said that "his education in art enables him to distinguish the bad from the good performance" and that "his taste and instinct which are the good records, and his education will complete his critical estimation." With all of which I am in complete agreement.

Why then this solicitude? Can it be that the pseudo-technical journalist is at last beginning to realise his true position in the scheme of things? If so, he should, in his own interests, refrain from publishing his misgivings.

I have the privilege to be,
One of the new recruits,

London, N.13.

WILLIAM D. OWEN.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Porte asks me to read his "open letter" again, but I have no need to do so. It did not occur to me to apply any of his remarks to myself, and my reply was merely dictated by a sense of gratitude to the technicians on whom Mr. Porte seems to have exhausted his English vocabulary, and to whom I owe any slight skill I may possess in obtaining better results from my gramophone than are possible to those who believe with Mr. Porte that it is impossible to improve on a sound-box taken haphazard out of stock. That my letter was not written altogether in vain is quite evident, if only from the touching, if belated, tribute to Mr. Wilson which it has elicited.

Purley.

Yours very truly,

LIONEL GILMAN.

HEBREW RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I hope it is not too late in the day to reply to Mr. I. Landy's letter in the March, 1926, issue of THE GRAMOPHONE. Although not of the Hebrew race, I very much appreciate and admire Jewish music, in the same way that, as Mr. Landy suggests, I admire Caruso and Chaliapine. My delay in replying was mainly caused by the delay I experienced in obtaining Victor 45204, but, however, I managed ultimately through "Glos Swego Para," the Polish "His Master's Voice," to obtain it.

I still think the best Jewish record I have heard to be "Havdolo" and "R'yei Adonoi Elohayi" on H.M.V. C.1216, sung by Cantor Mordechai Hershman; this is truly a magnificent record and should in my opinion be given the palm. All the same, however, Cantor Rosenblatt gives a most creditable performance on Victor 45204, although, personally, I don't like the mezza voce.

I thoroughly agree with your correspondent about Sirota, especially his Imperial records; the two records I have in mind are "Rachmono d'onei," on Imperial de Luxe, 102X, and "Kewakuras" (with quartet) and "Weschumru," on Parlophone E.3800; the first-named record especially is a veritable triumph, while the Parlophone item and some of Sirota's Zonophone, Odeon and Czecho-Slovakian H.M.V. records are also very good indeed.

There was a record published by the Vocalion Company of two Yiddish folk-songs entitled "Zehn Bruder" and "A bal-a-agoloh-lied" sung by Leonard Braun, which I should like to see reappear in the catalogue; this record, which I am fortunate enough to have in my possession, would, I am sure, have appealed very much to Mr. Landy. In addition I would also commend Columbia E.4320, "Halel" and "Eloheinu Velohei Avoseinu," sung by Cantor Berele Chagy, to his notice.

To conclude with a word of warning, I would like to warn collectors of Jewish records that those issued by the Actuelle and Guardsman Companies of the voices of Meyer Kanewsky and Joseph Cohen are, in my opinion, harsh and metallic and not well recorded.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN NAUNTON-RUSHEN.

Beckenham.

ARMCHAIR PHONATICS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE).

DEAR SIR,—The article in the May issue, under the name of Mr. P. Wilson, is surely intended in a humorous manner? I can indeed picture Mr. Wilson writing it with his tongue in his cheek, but as a serious effort, no, Sir: believe me, NO. Were this article taken seriously, we of many years' retail experience and world-wide clientele would tremble at the outcry that would arise from our numerous customers.

The man in the tropics will in future order not only his gramophone and records, but will at the same time insist that the sound-box shall be fitted with a thermometer specially marked at the correct degree for obtaining best results. Further he will require a refrigerating plant to reduce the temperature of his abode, together with an air fan to ensure the warm air being near the ceiling.

The man in the Arctic regions will expect the dealer to supply approved heating apparatus and so on. Imagine the consequences! A complete nervous breakdown of all connected with the gramophone industry! Picture for one moment the dealer of the future advertising in your magazine his "all-weather all-temperature draught-resisting Wilsonian Gramophone." Carry Mr. Wilson's theory to its logical conclusion, and we shall read, "The Opera last night was a complete failure owing to an attendant opening a top window instead of a bottom one, the Promenade Concerts being abandoned due to the inability of the management to obtain the exact atmospheric conditions in the hall."

I have read less amusing articles in *Punch*: but should he perchance be serious, I can then extend to Mrs. Wilson my heartfelt sympathy, and should advise her to consider the need of persuading her spouse to consult the local practitioner, in the meantime keeping him out of the sight of us poor gramophone sales experts.

Yours faithfully,

London, W.1.

F. W. H.

[Is it necessary to assure everyone that Mr. Wilson relishes the comic side of his technical researches as keenly as any of us. There are many people who are keenly interested in getting the best results from their gramophones, and glad to know of any means for getting them, whether by adjusting sound-boxes or regulating temperatures, or following any of the other experiments for which we are indebted to Mr. Wilson or to Our Expert Committee. There are others who agree with "F.W.H."—Ed.]

NATIONAL GRAMOPHONIC SOCIETY NOTES

[All communications should be addressed to The Secretary, N.G.S.
58, Frith Street, London, W.1.]

There is not much to report this month. The illustrated list of the Society's records, with an introductory note by Mr. Compton Mackenzie, has been sent to all members, and will be sent to any addresses of likely proselytes which members will be good enough to suggest to the Secretary.

One serious misprint has occurred in the labelling of the Mozart Symphony. It is called No. 22 instead of No. 28. Will members please make the correction at once on their records.

Splendid notices of the orchestral records were published in the *Daily Telegraph* (printed in these Notes last month), *The Observer*, *The Musical News and Herald*, *The Chesterian*, *The British Musician*, *Musical Opinion* and *The Phonograph*. Only the *Musical Times* was unkind—solely on the ground of surface noise. In this connection it is worth noting that we hope to improve this, the one weakness of N.G.S. records, in the works now being recorded—the Bax *Oboe Quintet*, the Ravel *Quartet in F* and the Dvorák *Piano Quintet*.

Some Comments

The Orchestral Records: "Let me congratulate the Society on the quite first-class orchestral records. I was frankly doubtful as to the success of the experiment, but now hope we shall be given many more."—F. V. Schuster. "They are all good—splendidly played and really excellently recorded: this is surely electrical recording at its best. Not a squeak or trace of 'edge' anywhere—every tone perfectly mellow and natural. Another gratifying point is the great improvement 'materially' of these new records: surface noise almost eliminated and 'blisters' non-existent. Congratulations!"—B. V. Hughes. "Congratulations on the new list—splendid."—Alec. Rowley.

Phantasy Quintet: "The Vaughan Williams in particular, to me, is quite first rate in every way. It is a rare treat."—Revd. D. Campbell Miller.

Brahms and Beethoven: "Permit me to offer you hearty congratulations on the perfectly wonderful recording of the Brahms Horn Trio. I know that work well and your three artists have done it beautifully, while your recording artists have surpassed themselves. So also the Beethoven Quartet. This last work of the greatest of musicians is something to be lived with, for its message is not revealed hastily or even soon . . . In doing things like these, in bringing to music lovers works which otherwise they could never possess for themselves, at command as it were, you are doing a real work of public benefit. It shall be my pleasant duty to tell the world so much, to such extent as I can"—William Braid White (Chicago).

NOTICE.—There will be a meeting at Murdoch's Salons, 461, Oxford Street, on Thursday, July 7th, at 7 p.m., when the new N.G.S. records will be played. Further particulars next month.

LATE NEWS.

A Selected List

Many readers, especially from overseas, have asked for a guinea's worth of "naps" from the current reviews. It is hard to supply this, but after consulting some of the reviewers I suggest the following for this month:—

Stabile, Parlo. R.O. 20011, 4s. 6d.

Peter Dawson, H.M.V. C. 1327, 4s. 6d.

Wotan's Farewell and Fire Music, Parlo. E. 10566-7, 9s., or *Figaro* and *Cosi fan Tutti* Overtures, H.M.V. D. 1224, 6s. 6d.

For lighter music, Richman, Brunswick 3435 3s., and *Musical Switch*, Col. 9196, 4s. 6d.

There are a dozen more equally clamouring for admission, and if H.M.V. C 1329 had arrived in time for "C.M.C." to review it, I am pretty sure that he would insist on my adding it—Mendelssohn's *Hear My Prayer*, recorded in the Temple Church, with the most thrilling treble solo by Master E. Lough.

London Editor.

NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written briefly and clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(506) **Appreciation.**—These two incidents might interest you. The natives here seem to have no appreciation of our music at all. They clash lamps and bang tins in the most delicate themes. One day I was playing the *Andantino* of the Brahms Clarinet Quintet (N.G.S.) when the boy came in, and having pulled the curtains, etc., stood still and listened carefully to the end of the record, when he remarked "Hi, mazuri sana"—"That's fine." On a second occasion when playing the last movement another boy remarked that it had "maneno tele"—"many words"; by which I imagine he realised there were several parts. I think yours must be the first chamber music complimented by an East African native.—M.B., Nakuru, Kenya.

(507) **Schumann Song Cycles.**—There is an excellent edition of *Dichterliebe* in the Dutch H.M.V. catalogue sung by the Dutch baritone, Thom. Denys, a famous Schumann interpreter on the Continent, on three black label discs (Nos. 720-722, 12 in.) recorded in England in 1923. . . . The recording is perfectly adequate, even the piano coming through well (for non-electric recording).—H.R., Capetown.

(508) **Dohnanyi.**—Like Mr. Meadmore, I have the greatest admiration for Von Dohnanyi, but I must have been more fortunate. I have been able to obtain his *Sonata in C sharp minor*, Op. 21, played as a viola solo by Lionel Tertis, Col. L.1731, 1732. Then the H.M.V. have a record by Wilhelm Backhaus (D.B.926), with *Liebesträum* (Liszt) on one side and *Naila Waltz* (Delibes—Dohnanyi) on the other. Both these recordings are well worth acquiring.—C.T.W., London, W.13.

(509) **Chausson.**—In his article "Unrecorded Chamber Music" (May, p. 495), Mr. Meadmore happily strays to a mention of Chausson's Symphony. He is wrong, however, in stating that M. Henri Defosse conducted this at a B.B.C. concert at Covent Garden. . . . The conductor was M. Pierre Monteux. . . . The Symphony is a great example of French orchestral music—finer, I think, than that of Franck: it is one of the few things of which quite well-informed gramophone companies need to be reminded. . . . A recording of this music would most probably be an unexpected success.—J.F.P., London.

(510) **Jewel Adaptors.**—Can any of your readers inform me how to get the best results from H.M.V. and similar records when played on a New Edison machine? I purchased the instrument about 4½ years ago, and was satisfied with it until I heard the new H.M.V. models, but compared with them the volume is poor. I use a Jewel adaptor, but the sound is comparatively weak and it will not play new electrical recordings, particularly the low notes. Is there an adaptor that will play such records well?—J.R.L., Bloemfontein.

(511) **Cheap Complete Works.**—With reference to Mr. Chapman's letter in April, page 475, the 4th Movement of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto can be got on Parlophone E.10032, played by Joan Manen. There is an interesting letter mentioning this particular disc in THE GRAMOPHONE for April, 1924, page 237.—M.J., Lewes.

(512) **Records Wanted.**—Is there any record in existence of Mendelssohn's "Consolation," Op. 19, No. 1, surely one of the most beautiful of the songs without words? I have also searched in vain for Chopin's "Prelude No. 7," which is very short, and would make a superb record with "Consolation"; and lastly, I have tried to find a tenor who would charm us with Handel's "Love in Her Eyes Sits Playing," and again am faced with a disappointment.—H.S.L., Wadebridge.

(513) **Albert Sandler.**—Over my Edison-Bell radio set on Sunday evenings I get some of the best music made by an instrumental quintette that the heart of man can desire. It comes from the Grand Hotel, Eastbourne, via land line and 2LO. It may be an impious wish, but I should be delighted to hear that some recording room staff had agreed to work overtime in order to put Albert Sandler's delightful music on to gramophone records.—H.T.B., Portsmouth.

[Sandler's solo records, Vocalion, are worth remembering.—Ed.]

(514) **Records Wanted.**—I shall be very much obliged if you will kindly inform me the address and name of the dealers of the under-mentioned records in your city:—

(1) Amour records (Russian gramophone records).
(2) Old Columbia records—Leo Ornstein, Kocian, etc.

(3) Old H.M.V. records—Sarasate's violin records (except "Zigeunerweisen," "Miraman," "Habanera," "Caprice Basque," "Tarantelle" and Bach's "Prelude").

(4) Old H.M.V. records—Grieg's piano records (except "Au Printemps").—S.M., Tokio, Japan.

[We have referred our correspondent to Foyle's in Charing Cross Road, but should be glad to hear of other gramophone dealers who specialise in rare and obsolete records.—Ed.]

(515) **Favourite Records.**—Among my best-loved records are "Deh! vieni, non tardar," Graziella Pareto; "Oh, sleep! why dost thou leave me?" Alma Gluck; Bizet's "Agnus Dei," Kirkby Lunn; "La Donna è mobile," Caruso; "Questa o quella," Caruso; "Some other bird," Jack Smith. I do not give these records as being the best, but just as six among many which have proved their worth to me.—W.H.H., Nottingham.

[Lack of space alone makes us omit the comments on the above list. Our correspondent suggests that other readers should be encouraged to give their six favourite records. We hope they will.—Ed.]

(516) **Mozart's Requiem.**—I have the three H.M.V. records of Mozart's "Requiem Mass." In what order should they be played?—T.D.J., Goole.

[("Requiem aeternam," "Kyrie eleison," "Dies irae," "Domine Jesu," "Hostias," "Agnus Dei," "Lux aeterna," "Cum sanctis.")—Ed.]

(517) **The Mormon Choir.**—The recent recording of the Mormon Choir, in the Tabernacle at Salt Lake City, draws attention to the old Tabernacle of Utah, which has extraordinary acoustical properties. It is built of wood in the shape of an egg. The interior forms what is known in optics as an "aplanatic" surface. No matter from what part of the surface the sound is reflected it arrives at the focus in the same time and there is no blurring of the sound. If a pin is dropped at the focus, at the narrow end of the "egg," it is heard at the focus at the large end as if it had been dropped at the feet.—A.B., Glasgow.

(518) **Banjo Records.**—Has Alfred A. Farland been recorded?—E. A. G., Batley.

(519) **Mica.**—With the growth of electrical and allied industries the supply of mica has become a matter of great importance. Its perfect cleavage, transparency and lack of colour when in thin sheets; its flexibility, toughness and non-conductivity of heat and electricity; its resistance to high temperatures, sudden change of temperature and to chemical decomposition, constitute an assemblage of properties possessed by no other single mineral and by no artificial products. The mica of commerce is restricted almost entirely to the varieties muscovite, potash mica, and phlogopite, magnesian mica. Slight differences in the physical properties of these micas give rise to forms particularly suited for special purposes. Thus the Indian ruby mica is the best for condensers; the hard green Carolina mica is the most satisfactory for use in stove fronts and furnace peep-holes; whilst, on account of its extreme flatness, the brown mica of certain parts of Georgia makes the finest gramophone diaphragms. . . .

"In a short paper on 'Mica and its International Relationships,' recently presented to the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, Mr. G. V. Hobson has condensed an extraordinary amount of information on the production, distribution and marketing of this mineral."

—From *Nature*, April 30, 1927, p. 652.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written briefly on separate slips and forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1, as early in the month as possible.]

(465) **Best Versions Wanted.**—I thank "C.B." in the March issue for reminding me of the Parlophone version of the "Fingal's Cave" Overture. I may say that before deciding in favour of the Columbia, the Parlophone and also the Velvet Face (503) were all tested by me, and found to be considerably inferior to the Columbia (L.1478). However, the question of interpretation is a personal matter; for myself, I prefer greatly the Wood version to that of Moerike. I think most people will agree with me. The point in favour of the Parlophone version is the excellent value for the money.—D.W.C., Salisbury.

(476b) **Eri tu.**—H.M.V. D.812, Leopold Demuth, is the most complete rendering I know. Cuts, five bars before "Eri tu" and four bars before "O dolcezza perdute" in accompaniment only; also, towards the end of the aria, five bars from "E finita" to "nel vedove cor."

H.M.V. D.B.179, Battistini, has only part of recitative, from "non e solei." Cut in accompaniment, four bars before "O dolcezza." The most artistic rendering of many that I have heard is by Joseph Schwartz on Polydor; no recitative.—W.E.C., Brunswick, Australia.

(485) **Joseph Farrington.**—Joseph Farrington before the War recorded for the now non-existent "Cinch" Company. I have in my possession one of these old discs, purchased second-hand, containing the two once popular songs, "Soldiers of the King" and "Private Tommy Atkins," in which his voice is shown to be a bass of splendid quality.—D.W.C., Salisbury.

(496) **Best Versions Wanted.**—I do not think better versions of the "Largo al Factotum" could be found than any of the following:—(a) H.M.V.: Ruffo (D.B.405), Granforte (D.B.834) or in English by Peter Dawson (C.1007). (b) Columbia: Stracciari (7352). (c) Vocalion: Rimini (A.0204). Any of the above will give satisfaction. I have a slight preference for the Granforte as the best. Opinion must be governed by the reverse sides of the discs.—D.W.C., Salisbury.

(501) **Harp Records.**—The best harp records I have ever heard were some Edison "Re-creations." The two morceaux by Miss Sidonie Goossens (H.M.V. B.1753) are good. The harp also comes through well in the Ravel Septet (Col. L.1518-9), but the records are rather expensive. Although not strictly a harp record, Parlophone E.10237 is excellent. The harp is here in combination with the violin and organ. I hope in the near future one of our recording companies (preferably Columbia) will issue Ravel's delightful "Introduction and Allegro" for harp and orchestra. If we could have the composer as conductor, this work would be a most desirable possession.—D.W.C., Salisbury.

(504) **Best Versions Wanted.**—(a) The two best violin versions of the "Londonderry Air" is either Duophone G.S.7005 or H.M.V. C.994, by Daisy Kennedy and De Groot respectively. I should like to mention, while the subject is under discussion, Columbia 4071 by the St. James' String Sextet and the Organ Solo by Goss-Custard (H.M.V. B.2375). It is difficult to praise an individual record from the above, but any of the above can be ordered with perfect safety. (b) Among the several vocal records of "Solvieg's Song," I must place above all others the ideal and sympathetic rendering by Dora Labbette (Col. L.1458), although Mavis Bennett (H.M.V. C.1229) is also good and must not be overlooked. I can also give the Parlophone discs (E.10325-6) of the second "Peer Gynt" Suite, to which "Solvieg's Song" rightly belongs, a word of praise. If a violin version is required it would be difficult to better Leo Strockoff (Col. L.947).—D.W.C., Salisbury.

"The Gramophone" Exchange & Mart

RATES.—Advertisements are accepted for this section at the rate of twopence per word with a minimum charge of two shillings. The advertiser's name and address will be charged for, and single letters and single figures will be counted as words. Compound words will be counted as two words. All advertisements must be prepaid in the form of postal orders or cheques addressed to The Advertisement Manager, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. Should the advertiser desire his announcement to be addressed to a box number, c/o THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W.1 (which address—six words—must, of course, be paid for at the ordinary rate of twopence per word), 6d. extra for the forwarding of replies must be sent.

FOR SALE

LINGUAPHONE French, Italian Courses.—Box 2612, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W.1.

DECCA Telesmatic Portable. This year's £8 model. Guaranteed perfect condition. Best offer over £6.—CLEWER, BUCKINGHAM.

LINGUAPHONE French Course, excellent condition, £3, also Iolanthe £30s., Patience £1.—SHINTON, NETHERTON, DUDLEY.

GRAMOPHONE Vols. 3 and 4 unbound, unsold, 9s. per Vol.—
GWALKER, "COLWYN," WESTLANDS AVENUE, NEWCASTLE, STAFFS.

MOTOR CYCLE, 1924 Raleigh. 2½ h.p. Semi-sports. Electric lighting. Overhauled last year, excellent condition. £25 or near offer.—Box 2567, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W.1.

PERFECTLY new No. 4 H.M.V. sound-box, price £1.—Box 2600, THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, FRITH STREET, W.1.

ORCHORSOL Sound-box, new and perfect, 38/6, also records "electric" and old recording, cheap, Wagner, etc.—NEDEN, 25, CRESCENT GROVE, S.W.4.

WANTED ABROAD.

RECORDING room operator with full knowledge of new electrical recording process.—Reply with full particulars to Box M.L. c/o DAVIES & CO., 95, BISHOPSGATE, E.C.2.

[For Advertisers' Announcements see page xxv.]



Gramophone Societies' Reports

The Brixton Gramophone Society has moved its headquarters to 38A, St. George's Road, Belgrave Road, London, S.W.1, and has altered its title to **THE CENTRAL LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY**. The new premises are very comfortable and central for Londoners: full details may be obtained from the Hon. Sec. Mr. J. T. Fisher, 28A, Fieldhouse Road, Balham, S.W.12. The equipment includes Wilson Panharmonic Horn: and besides the usual type of programme, the May meetings included a talk by Mr. G. W. Webb on "Electrical Records and Systems of Reproduction" and a musical talk by Mr. J. S. Veal.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY had the advantage of a lecture by Mr. P. Wilson, our valued contributor, on the subject of electrical recording. He dealt with the difference between the old and the new methods of recording, with the objects in view and with the possibilities of attainment in the future. His fluent and lucid extempore discourse evidently enthralled his listeners.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY heard some fine old recordings on April 30th, such as Caruso in "Si vous l'aviez compris," Stracciari in "Dio possente," Heifetz in "Capricieuse," Gadski and Amato in "Su duque," Olszewska in "An die Hoffnung," and Bohnen in "Abendlich strahlt" (the last two Polydors)—all records worth remembering. At the May meeting a programme of Verdi's "Otello," an opera which has been dealt with in **THE GRAMOPHONE**, was given. The hon. secretary is Mr. T. H. Mills, 14, Paynesfield Avenue, East Sheen, S.W.14.

THE NORTH WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY (Hon. Secretary, Mr. E. G. Lamble, 51, Balmoral Road, N.W.2) spent a delightful evening on

May 8th with the new electric recordings of *The Mikado*, combined with experiments on Virtz and other sound boxes.

The Mikado also formed the programme for the last recital of the season of **THE NOTTINGHAM GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY**, which is in a very healthy condition and hopes to give fifteen or sixteen recitals next season. Officers were elected: the hon. secretary is Mr. J. R. Holmes, 26, Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

Mr. Peter Latham delivered his promised talk on "Chamber Music" to **THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY** (Hon. Sec., 67, Gourrock Road, Eltham, S.E.9) on May 9th with a very interesting selection of illustrative records.

The keenness and enterprise of all these London Societies, which are small in numbers, are a notable feature of the reports.

The new hon. secretary of **THE HARROGATE AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY** is Mr. D. E. England, 24, Spring Grove, Harrogate, Mr. H. W. Lambert having resigned on leaving Harrogate.

THE SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY had a varied programme given by Mr. Thos. H. Brooks on May 3rd, with a short talk on the new methods of recording which had been recently witnessed by Mr. Brooks and the hon. secretary, Mr. H. Acton (48, Idsworth Road, Pitsmoor, Sheffield).

Looking further afield we get a very well-chosen and varied programme of Columbia, H.M.V. and Zonophone records from **THE BULAWAYO GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY**, which was started two years ago and has about a hundred members.